BHIMA BHOI

Prayers and Reflections





Translated by
Siddharth Satpathy

Bhima Bhoi

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Selections from *Stutichintamani*

Translated from the Oriya by

Siddharth Satpathy



RUPANTAR

First published in India in 2006 by Rupantar, a Centre for Translation. L.D.Institute Campus, N.6-470, I.R.C. Village, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015, Orissa.

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ISBN 81-901759-1-2

Rupantar is a no-profit organization for promoting translation activities

Cover design by Digital Vision.
Printed at Siksha Prakashani, Bhubaneswar.

For my parents

I have no hope,
no one to rely on.
My courage fails me.
What do I do?
O Lord,
look after this world of Yours,
carry Your own burden.

Bhima Bhoi

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Acknowledgements

I translated Bhima Bhoi's verses mostly during a Delhi winter at Reides Lines. Those days of hope and despair will always remain dear to me.

I am deeply indebted to Udaya Kumar who first suggested the idea of translating Bhima Bhoi. I express my sincere thanks to Sumanyu Satpathy for his editorial comments and expert advice.

I am grateful to J. P. Das, Harish Trivedi, Jatindra K. Nayak for the encouragement I have received from them. I am obliged to Sadananda Agrawalla, Minati Mishra, Prafulla Dash, Kedar Mishra, Gouranga Dash, Arjun Swain, Artaballabh Mohanty, Dharanidhar Sahu, Dilip Naik for their support.

Ambarish, Madhusmita, Mahendra, Nityananda, Pradyumna, Pankaj, Swagatika, Masood, Siddharth, Chinmoy, Shwetapadma, Sujit — all dear friends: some, still in touch, others linger in memory.

I express my gratitude to Papula, and my uncles Kshirod Satpathy and Sibananda Mishra for their generosity and indulgence.

My late grandfather remains a much cherished part of my memories of early adolescence.

Siddharth Satpathy

Translator's Note

Stuti Chintamani consists of a hundred odd 'boli' or cantos. Each canto has twenty rhyming couplets. Selections from nearly all the cantos have been rendered into English in this volume. I am aware that a complete translation compares favorably with a selective one for purposes of specialized scholarship. However, my focus on selected verses from Bhima's narrative is prompted by a concern that, given the bulk of the original in Oriya, a complete translation would be unwieldy and may lose its appeal to contemporary readers in English.

As a translator I have made an attempt to render representative verses from the original into English. I have focused on the prominent issues and concerns operative in the text which make *Stuti Chintamani* a significant witness to the changing times in which Bhima lived and composed. I have also tried to ensure that most of the cantos are represented in the translation. In this manner, some of the verses unrelated to what I conceive as the central concerns of the text, find their way into the translation. Such verses help to provide the reader with the 'general flavour' of the text, the background in which prominent issues are embedded. Given that the distinctions we make between the prominent and not so prominent themes of a text change with time, I felt that it would be useful to give both the aspects adequate representation in the translation.

In this translation an attempt has been made to remain as close to the original as possible. However, at times, when the translator is forced to choose between fidelity to the original and the readability of the translation, minor liberties have been taken. For instance, on occasions, two or more successive couplets in the original are combined to facilitate a better and more comprehensible translation. These are indicated in the verse numbers on the right hand margin. Finally, these translations from *Stuti Chintamani* are based on the authenticated edition of the text published by Utkal University in 1950. Besides, the version of the text published by Dharma Grantha Store in 2000 and the manuscript preserved in Bhima Bhoi monastery, Khaliapali, have also been consulted.

Introduction

I

Stuti Chintamani is the spiritual autobiography of Bhima Bhoi, a late nineteenth century tribal poet and religious leader of western Orissa. Bhima was an enthusiastic supporter and propagator of a reformist cult called Mahima Dharma which derived its primary support from the lower strata as well as the disgruntled sections of the higher rungs in the feudal society. (1) Founded by an enigmatic religious leader in early nineteenth century, the cult drew upon medieval Oriya spiritual and philosophical traditions to construct an intense religious vision that combined elements of Buddhist Shunyavad, devotional Vaisnavism and Tantra Yoga. It variously characterizes the ultimate reality or the Shunya Brahman as Alekha (indescribable), Nirguna (without attributes), Nirakara (formless), Anadi (eternal), and Mahima (glory or radiance). Liberation implies a union with the Shunya Brahman, achieved, not through brahminical rites or rituals but with the help of devotion, meditation and yogic practices that encourage one to see the universe within the body. The spiritual frame-work of the cult and its attendant social movement generated a wide spread and deeply felt protest against traditional forms of social stratification and flourished rapidly in the feudatory states of western and central Orissa despite severe antagonism from the establishments of feudal power.(2)

Bhima Bhoi played a crucial role in popularising the new cult. Hagiographical accounts suggest that he was blessed by Mahima Gosain—who founded the cult and was accepted as divine by the believers—with the vision of a bard. Since the Gosain left behind no canon of scriptures, Bhima took it upon himself to formulate one. He primarily composed devotional verse which conveyed the spiritual message of the cult to the laity and successfully created a mass-base for the incipient religious movement. His productive

years lasted for nearly three decades; though a comprehensive and authentic list of Bhima's works is not available scholars usually agree on the following texts as the genuine compositions of the poet: *Stuti Chintamani*, *Brahma Nirupan Gita*, *Adi Anta Gita*, *Astaka Behari Gita*, *Nirbeda Sadhana*, *Shruti Nisedha Gita*, *Chautisa Madhuchakra*, *Manusabha Mandala*, *Mahima Vinod*, and *Bhajan Mala*.

Stuti Chintamani is arguably the most popular of Bhima's compositions. The verse narrative consists of nearly two thousand couplets and has acquired immense popularity over the years. The popularity of the text is underlined by its easy availability. I bought my first copy of the text—a recent and easily affordable edition—from a street side hawker's shop near the railway station that also sells 'popular' crime thrillers and 'romantic' fiction. Words and ideas from the nineteenth century narrative have worked their way into popular codes of communications; there are occasions when lines from *Stuti Chintamani* are used as aphorisms and sayings across western Orissa.

Slowly, from the street side edition I moved on to a more scholarly and not so recent version of the composition. Through the good offices of a sympathetic librarian I acquired a rare 1950 edition of the text. The popular nineteenth century verse narrative enjoys canonical status in the academic circles and is seriously studied as part of the university syllabus. The engagement between regional language scholarship and Bhima Bhoi is nearly hundred years old and it touches upon a variety of issues such as whether the poet was blind; Bhima's location in the medieval tradition of saint poets of Orissa; literary nuances of his poetry etc.

Gradually, from the confines of the libraries that store narratives both by and about Bhima, I moved towards the region where Bhima lived and composed. My fascination with *Stuti Chintamani* prompted me to study an old manuscript of the text preserved in the monastery set up by the charismatic poet in a small village of western Orissa. In course of my wanderings, I came across references to certain spiritual-medicinal practices that have developed over the years

when the text was composed. Certain sections of *Stuti Chintamani* along with a select set of his other devotional lyrics, are chanted as incantations to charm away fever, snake bites and even leprosy. In the remote hamlets across western and central Orissa, while modern medical practices have not yet won unflinching loyalty, popular faith has discovered a source of alternate healing in the verses of Bhima Bhoi. In fact, recent anthropological projects undertaken by German and Indian scholars throws up a surprise: majority of the converts to the Mahima cult over the past few years are more attracted by its healing practices.

The point is this nineteenth century verse narrative amazingly continues to appeal to the different sections of a large number of present day 'consumers'. It moves the mass, engages the academic, and more over lends itself to alternative healing practices. The enduring appeal of the narrative cuts through various forms of loyalties based on caste, class and region etc. Any attempt to analyze what can be termed as the 'composite popularity' of *Stuti Chintamani* may begin by differentiating the text's popularity from certain other forms of popularity. *Stuti Chintamani* is not popular in the way a crime thriller is; it does not entertain or please. The nineteenth century narrative is also not popular in the way the *Puranas* are; its appeal goes beyond, in whatever limited way, the pale of any particular cult. It is also not popular in the way Alfred Tennyson's poetry is; it does not remain confined to the boundaries of a 'serious' and 'high' aesthetic taste. Yet it enjoys mass popularity, moves a religious heart and generates academic and literary interest.

The relationship between this kind of composite popularity and print culture is immensely complex. For instance, one can argue that the continued popularity of *Stuti Chintamani* is an indication of the longevity of a pre-modern 'composite popularity' vis-a-vis modern printing mechanism and its attendant forms of popularity. Jagannath Das, the medieval composer of *The Bhagavat* in Oriya also composed a verse narrative called the *Mruguni Stuti* or the *Hymns Sung by the Female Deer When in Danger*. These devotional lyrics are an integral part of the mainstream devotional

Vaisnavism in rural Orissa. But one also hears that some of these verses are invoked as magical chants by the community of bird-hunters and catchers to prey effectively. On the other hand, one might as well argue that print culture effects the simultaneous accessibility of a narrative like *Stuti Chintamani* to different kinds of audience and reading practices leading to its composite popularity. Even in Bhima's monastery today, the inmates would keep a printed text of the narrative as a handy reference during sessions of devotional kirtan. The printed text gives a ready access to 'authenticity'—something much valued by the devotees and other kinds of 'practitioners' of the verse narrative.

II

Stuti Chintamani is not only the most popular but also the most autobiographical of Bhima's compositions. Most devotional compositions are autobiographical in the sense that they delineate intense personal experience of the divine. At times the poet-devotee's experience of the referential world also features in the composition as a subtext. In *Stuti Chintamani*, the poet's personal experiences of the divine and of the referential world come together in the construction of a variety of self-images: defiant, contemptuous of traditional authority, intensely anxious, sorrowful and at the same time full of hope, universal compassion and piety. Through these self-images, Bhima, the most popular leader of a dissenting socio-religious movement that positioned itself against the upper echelons of feudal social stratification, also narrativizes the troubled history of an embattled community in nineteenth century Orissa.

This feature of the narrative acquires significance in the context of a recent academic interest in the study of the advent of modernity and the formation of subjectivity in nineteenth century colonial India. The arrival of the imperial state machinery and of the Christian missionaries with their discourses ushered in rapid changes in the cultural landscapes of the era. Responses of the colonial subject vis-à-vis the rapidly changing times and values have been studied and analyzed. The issues of reformation and revivalism, the

emergence of the nationalist movement and its socio-cultural ramifications, and the redefinition of gender and caste roles have been explored by scholars from a variety of disciplines.

With the exception of a small number of significant studies, current academic focus on the redefinition of tradition in face of colonial modernity often chooses to confine itself to the urban, middle class context. Here, a text as *Stuti Chintamani* offers relatively less explored issues and challenges. It opens a window onto the travails of the plain land tribal and lower castes residing in the feudatory states of British rural India vis-à-vis the advent of colonial modernity. The purpose of the following sections is to situate Bhima and his composition in their historical context.

III

The biography of Bhima cannot easily be constructed through 'records', 'documents' and other such customary tools of historical verification. One of the difficulties involves the lack of such source material on Bhima. Besides, contemporary historical methodology would caution us to treat the meager documents available not as conclusive evidence but rather as narratives of truth. Apart from such 'authentic' narratives there are also alternative and popular systems of truth constructed by followers and admirers over the years around this charismatic poet. There are several 'true' life-histories of Bhima contesting with one another. The following is one of them. (4)

Bhima Bhoi was born sometime between 1845 and 1855. His birth place is uncertain, but place names such as Garamdiha in Redhakhol district; Jatasingha in Sonepur district; and Paiksara in Balangir district of mid western Orissa have gained widespread currency in the Bhima lore.(5) It is certain that he was born into the Kondh tribe; though Bhima remains silent about the identity of his parents, he emphasizes his Kondh identity in his compositions.(6) A process of hinduization of the plain-land tribal who lived mostly as land-less agricultural labourers had already started in Bhima's childhood. It is believed that Bhima spent his early years in one

Chaitanya Pradhan's house in the village of Kankanpada working as a cowherd. Here he listened to customary oral recitations of the Oriya the Bhagabat and memorized them with ease. The acculturalization of the plain land tribal was so decidedly complete by Bhima's generation that the poet betrays a more or less total amnesia as regards Kondh cultural expressions. Even the pre-conversion compositions of Bhima, though they lean more towards the folk traditions, testify to an apparent amnesia.

Bhima's initiation into Mahima dharma happened quite early in his life. It seems that he was initiated into the movement by its founder, the enigmatic Mahima Gosain, around 1862 (S. Mahapatra 1983: 15). By the age of 16 Bhima had acquired considerable prominence within the Mahimaite community on account of his devotional compositions which were first sung at the Mahima dharma convocation held at Khuntuni in 1865 (Viswanath Baba 1978: 57). During this phase of his career Bhima met his most important disciples and life long companions—Hari Panda and Vasudev Panda. The Panda brothers hailed from the village of Banahar near Sambalpur. Hagiographic accounts suggest that these two learned Brahmin pundits were sent by Mahima Gosain to function as Bhima's scribes (P.M. Nayak 2001:102).

Popular memory suggests that roughly around this time, Bhima came into open conflict with the Kshatriya ruler of the feudatory state of Rairakhol – Goura Chandra Dev. The young poet was imprisoned for a while and was released only on the condition that he quit the state (P.M. Nayak 2001:103). In other words, by the late 1860s Bhima's Mahimaite identity and practices had already been recognized as an unwanted disturbance if not a threat to the dominant socio-religious discourse of the feudatory state that legitimized a brahmin-kshatriya ascendancy.

From Rairakhol, Bhima migrated to the village of Binka in the neighbouring state of Sonepur via Sangrampur, Phuljhari, Sandha, Kumarkeli, Jaloe and Bidurpali (P.M. Nayak 2001:103). After spending a brief period of three to four months in Binka, the largest village and a major river trade center of the Sonepur state, Bhima

shifted to a nearby village called Gulunda. Here he spent a considerable period – accounts vary between three to ten years – and garnered the support of the village gauntia or thekedar, the local wine distiller and money lender and a learned Vaisnav of the village. Bhima and his entourage set up their establishment on the gauntia's land and were economically supported by the gauntia family during the entire period of their stay. Eventually Bhima had to quit Gulunda on account of an attack on his establishment. While the local people claim that a group of Naga sadhus attacked and coerced Bhima. some scholars contest that a fellow Mahimaite from the Dhenkanal region came and alleged that Vima had kidnapped his sister Annapurna. In the ensuing furore Bhima had to quit (P.M. Nayak 2001: 103).

The next destination in Bhima's odyssey was the village of Bhursapali. During his stay there for about a year Vima acquired three of his five consorts – Annapurna, Sumedha and Rohini. (7) Hagiographic accounts suggest that Annapurna received the blessings of Mahima Gosain and came to serve Bhima faithfully. The others were the daughters of prominent local disciples. Sumedha's father Mohandas was a gauntia while Rohini hailed from a famous Vaisya family of Balangir. During my field work in the region I came across patriarchal oral narratives that portray Bhima as a silent observer in the entire process of acquisition of his consorts. Interviews with the descendants of Mohandas suggest that Annapurna joined Bhima on her own and it was she who coaxed and cajoled an initially reluctant Mohandas to give away his daughter. He eventually ascribed the birth of his daughter to the blessings of the saint poet and decided to return the favour by marrying his girl off to Bhima. Thus, the relationship between the poet and his followers was sealed through matrimonial alliances. (8) The narratives, however, play down the physical aspect of matrimony and are obviously designed to bolster the divine identity of Bhima. They emphatically assert that there was no sexual relationship between the saint and his consorts and that Bhima begot his children by sheer magical power.

The poet eventually settled down in the village of Khaliapali around 1877 (P.M. Nayak 2001: 99) and spent the rest of his years without further migrations. His establishment was primarily dependent on income from agriculture and donations. Mohandas donated about twenty five acres of land to Bhima along with his daughter. This apart, the poet's monastery had roughly about thirty two acres of land.(9) It is believed that the gauntia of Khaliapali village was motivated by Hari and Vasudev Panda to donate all his land to Bhima. In return, he was offered a suitable settlement in the ancestral village of the Panda brothers where they had considerable property. (10) Years of settled agriculture brought prosperity to Bhima's life. The acquisition of significant cultural tokens followed. The poet leader who began his journey as an illiterate low caste cowherd began to carry a lathi decorated with ivory. (11) Popular memory suggests that a few horses were bought as well. For the downtrodden masses such cultural tokens usually associated with the upper caste, the rich and the powerful in a 'feudal' set up, were value loaded. They helped in establishing Bhima as an exemplum.

After Mahima Gosain's death in 1876, Bhima severed all his ties with Joranda– Gosain's principal seat in the feudatory state of Dhenkanal. A parallel line of the movement developed centering on Bhima. The divinization of the poet reached its summit during this period. His disciples, especially the two Brahmin scribes, used to seat Bhima and Annapurna on an altar and worship them as part of the rituals of the monastery.(12) Such a ritualized worship of the poet went hand in hand with Bhima's frequent claims of a divine genealogy. Often in his vast body of compositions Bhima would establish filial ties with God. Apart from the divinization of the leader, a desire to appropriate Kshatriya cultural norms was also apparent in Khaliapali monastery. The ashram used to have a collection of weapons, remnants of which can be seen even today. On the day of Dusserah the weapons were carried out on a procession by the inmates. Often Bhima and later on his son used to accompany the procession through the village on horse back. It seems that the entire

ceremony had a degree of similarity with the one carried out in the garh or the seat of the feudatory chief wherein an armed priest on horseback assumed symbolic kingship for a day (P.M. Nayak 2001:48).

Early in the year 1881 a group of Mahimaites from the Sambalpur region came to Puri to demonstrate against the practice of idolatry symbolized in the Jagannath cult, and they intended to burn the wooden deities. In the ensuing scuffle between the temple priests and the Mahimaites one death was reported (S. Mahapatra1983:17). A number of accounts of the event such as the one of C.E. Buckland and those published in the *Utkal Dipika* make no reference to Bhima's involvement in the incident. However, the Census Report of 1911 and scholars such as B.C. Mazumdar, are of the opinion that Bhima instigated the attack. (13) In any case, the dramatic event drew the attention of the British administration as well as the middle-class intelligentsia to Bhima and the Mahimaites in general. The image of the poet constructed in British administrative reports and middle-class newspaper narratives is unflattering.(14) He is portrayed as a man having illicit relationship with women ("papa pranaya") and as a fraudulent leader struggling to keep his mass base intact. A section of the intelligentsia went a step further and perceived the tribal and low-caste identity of Bhima and other followers as a source of corruption in Mahima dharma. (15)

Nevertheless, the middle-class intelligentsia did reveal a sense of appreciation for the poet's compositions. A report in the *Utkal Dipika* dated 19 November 1881 reads, "his compositions are of a rare merit, even the educated people can seldom compose like him." In the context of the late nineteenth century Oriya intelligentsia's desire to lay claims on a rich literary tradition which could match those of the neighboring linguistic zones, Bhima's devotional compositions were always welcome. (16)

Around 1891 Bhima came into open conflict with the local ruling elite for a second time in his life. (17) He was accused of immoral practices and was challenged to prove the purity of his cult through an *agnipariksha* by Niladhar Singh Deo, the rajah

of Sonepur feudatory state. Popular memory as well as frequent references in Bhima's compositions suggests that the king was jealous of the poet's prosperity. A sense of outrage over alleged immoral practices coupled with royal jealousy brought about the conflict. It is interesting to look into the economic aspect of this conflict. As it has already been suggested, Bhima's entire establishment supported themselves through income from agriculture and the required land was donated by various gauntias. However, in the agrarian structure of the Sonepur state the gauntias were not allowed to sell, mortgage on transfer their lands (L.E.B.Cobden Ramsay 1910: 325). Previous to 1887 the villages of the state were put up to auction as regards the bhogra lands—service lands of the lessee or the gauntia of the village; the amount bid for the bhogra lands gave a right to hold the lease of the village for five years; the amount was paid in a lump sum. However, after the year of 1887, the guantias had to make annual payments for these bhogra lands as per a new settlement. The transition from a five year settlement to an annual settlement is indicative of royal anxiety over better and perhaps easier collection of land tax and royal wish to lessen the influence of the gauntias over their villages. In this context, the royal authority would have resented over the years to recognize a large scale land donation made by a gauntia to a religious monastery because the land would then gradually slip into the category of rent free or mafi grant of the debottar type. This resentment, probably boiling over a considerable period since the establishment of the monastery in 1877 played its role in the conflict.

Popular narratives extant in the region suggest that influential disciples and followers of Bhima stayed put in the garh for about a month so as to face the trial by fire on behalf of their leader. However, the dramatic fire ordeal could not take place eventually due to the King's sudden and untimely death following a mysterious insect bite, high fever and fatal diarrhea.(18) The sudden demise of the king was popularly accepted as a further confirmation of the poet's saint hood.

The saint himself died shortly after, in the year of 1895. (19) He was survived by his consorts, son Kaplieswsar and daughter Lavanyavati. Annapurna was chosen by the followers to take charge of the ashram, after Bhima's death. Lavanyavati became the leader of the khaliapali group of Mahimaites after Annapurna. The Bhoi family continued to generate and sustain popular support till the line ended with Lavanyavati's death somewhere in the 1930s.

IV

As mentioned earlier *Stuti Chintamani* bears witness to the tribal poet's construction of identity vis-à-vis the dominant cultural forces of the time. It documents the processes in which the tides of colonial modernity in the hinterlands of nineteenth century Orissa altered the traditional ways of speaking about the self, received modes of perceiving the ecology, customary notions of time and history, and already available ideas of the body. In other words, *Stuti Chintamani* can be studied as a literary site of such alterations.

The industrial mode of resource usage introduced by the colonial British administration in Western Orissa brought about massive changes in the already existing patterns of consumption. It effectively converted a great range of natural products into commodities for which demand could multiply ceaselessly in the industrial sector of England. Timber for instance, was eagerly commodified. By around 1860 Britain had emerged as the 'world leader' in deforestation (M. Gadgil and R. Guha 1992: 118). By 1889 the imperial rules for forest conservancy and an elaborate system of timber felling was in operation in certain regions of Western Orissa (L. E. B. Cobden Ramsay 1982: 301). Cobden Ramsay observes on the forests of the Rairakhol feudatory state where Bhima spent his early years, "At one time apparently it contained a considerable quantity of valuable sal; with the advance of railway much of this has now been cut, and practically sleeper operations are now confined to the timber to be found on the hill sides, all trees fit for sleeper having been cut away from the valleys and uplands" (L E B Cobden Ramsay 1982: 311).

It is particularly interesting to analyze how *Stuti Chintamani* responds to the pervasive commodification of forests. It explicitly associates, in an apocalyptic vein, British military aggression with massive scale deforestation (25th canto). Bhima moves on to portray nature in a state of anxiety over its well being (13th canto) — a portrayal whose emotional significance is better understood in the context of the rapid alterations brought about in the traditional patterns of resource usage by the imperial administration. Yet again, Bhima delineates nature in a state of stunted fertility and identifies with it (44th canto). It can be argued that an identification of the self with nature is a familiar trope of devotional poetry. But such an argument misses the emotional investment of the poet in such forms of experience. The image of nature with a stunted fertility needs to be seen as embodying the acute sense of alienation between the individual and his ecology resulting from the intervention of the colonial state machinery. In the context of Bhima, this intervention primarily took the form of the introduction of the industrial mode of resource usage. In case of the Kondhs of the neighboring feudatory states who practiced human sacrifice to ensure nature's fertility, the encounter with colonialism was in the context of the sustained effort by British administration at 'humanizing' the savages (F. Padel 1995 : 357-9).

With the emphasis on commodification and consumption of resources economic sections and social strata associated with these processes grew in importance. The new belief system that developed in the context of the European industrial revolution attached an unprecedented veneration to the market (M. Gadgil and R. Guha 1992: 116). In fact, this feature of the industrial mode of resource use is of crucial importance to our analysis. It can be argued that with manufacture and commerce the dominant activities, market became the focal point in the socio-cultural life of the 'economic frontiers' in the hinterland of late nineteenth century Orissa. The figure of the moneylender who regulated cash flow into the market grew in prominence.

Stuti Chintamani reveals how a new cultural idiom developed

centering around the institution of the market. Images drawn from the realm of the market are strewn all over the text. Thus, God is imagined as a peddler displaying knowledge in His basket (1st canto); as a cruel, merciless and unscrupulous moneylender (47th canto). The sexual union between his parents is described by Bhima through metaphors of trade (18th canto). There are recurrent allusions to the local trading class community (19th canto). Bhima's apocalyptic imagination often contemptuously predicts a dire fate for the rich who refuse Mahima dharma (23rd canto). The massive presence of the market in Bhima's spiritual autobiography corresponds to the presence of a rich and thriving mercantile community in the state of Sonepur, trading in food grains and tasser cloth (L E B Codben-Ramsay 1982: 322).

Bhima's invective against the rich is framed by his poor economic condition on one hand, and his desire for upward economic mobility on the other. In *Stuti Chintamani* Bhima refers to his poor economic condition on a number of occasions and clearly identifies material poverty as a fundamental cause of his suffering (5th canto). Consequently, the autobiography records a consistent desire for wealth and riches. In this context, Mahima dharma emerges in the spiritual narrative as a religion of promise. Devotion to Mahima Gosain is advocated as a source of material prosperity (57th canto). Devotion to the Guru, one is assured, "ensures a life devoid of diseases and ailments"; blesses one with "wife, children, and cattle" and earns one recognition in "the symposiums of the gods, of men and of the king as well". Often Bhima sets himself up as an exemplum and assures the devotees that his personal riches are sourced from Lord Alekh.

Apart from a desire for upward economic mobility, a desire to appropriate a Kshatriya status surfaces in *Stuti Chintamani*. Related referential practices prevalent in Khaliapali monastery have already been referred to. While discussing the rapid peasantization and hinduization of the tribes in the nineteenth century Orissa, Biswamoy Pati observes that most of the tribes were internalized by the Hindu social structure as Shudras while the tribal chief's were absorbed

as Kshatriyas into the Varna system (B. Pati 1993: 14). Though Bhima does not explicitly claim a Kshatriya status in his autobiography, all the connotations of the Kshatriya caste – valor, power, heroism—are evoked in relation to the self. That is, the self is spoken of in terms of these varna specific categories. Bhima repeatedly claims for himself superhuman power (26th canto). This apart, Bhima constructs for himself a flattering genealogy – a practice that was popular among the ruling elite of the frontier states of nineteenth century Orissa who formulated legendary narratives that could support their claim to Kshatriya status. Bhima frequently claims to be the son of Lord Anadi (34th canto). The claim of super human power and the construction of a distinguished genealogy constitute Bhima's participation in the dominant Kshatriya discourse of the era. Apart from the attempt to appropriate a Kshatriya status, an attempt to sanskritize oneself is also displayed in Bhima's identity project. In an imitation of the traditional brahminical discourse on dietary habits, the consumption of meat and wine is scoffed at as a sign of the degenerate times of kali yuga.

However, the desire to appropriate upper caste cultural practices manifests itself in *Stuti Chintamani* along with an opposite desire and attempts to construct the discourse of an alternative socio-spiritual stratification that violates the four fold varna hierarchy. In the 28th boli, Bhima speaks of different categories of people born with various ansha. Naga ansha, Kama ansha, Prithvi ansha, Visnu ansha, Chandra ansha and so on. Literally the term, ansha indicates part or segment. Bhima interprets the social behavior or social destiny of a person in terms of the ansha of the particular mythological, spiritual figure the person is born with. Thus, one who is born with the attributes of Prithvi is endowed with supreme patience. In other words, here, the social is submitted to a spiritual mythographic analysis. In such a socio-spiritual classification, not surprisingly, the Mahimaites are the most powerful. They lord over all others. However, the most important of such formulations refers to the British as being born with the attributes of Kala Yama and of being powerful and hot-tempered in consequence. The new and

modern reality—the presence of the British— is absorbed into traditional mythographic categories such as Yama ansha, Kshatriya pana etc. This combination of mythographic vision and referential documentation of the contemporary is a distinct feature of *Stuti Chintamani.*

Bhima's myths on kali yuga and satya yuga embody his notions of time and history. The poet's location is that of a 'recently' hinduized tribal torn between opposite urges. On one hand, he seeks to conform and earn the recognition of the brahminical socio-religious hierarchy; Bhima's appropriation of Kshatriya cultural norms and brahminical mores testify to it. On the other, he rejects the hierarchy and promotes a more egalitarian social vision as embodied in the basic tenets of Mahima cult which denounced caste system, idol worship, the Brahmin-Kshatriya nexus integral to the feudal set up. This fractured location produced a divided consciousness in Bhima. Such a consciousness sustains the myths of kali yuga and satya yuga that are pulled in opposite directions by inherent discordant elements.

Kali yuga is spoken of in terms of a high tide of Prakriti when people give in to the sins of greed and lust (70^{th} canto). The all pervasive Prakriti, however, is not gender or caste specific (50^{th} canto). Whether male or female, high or low castes, all are victims of the degenerating influences of Prakriti, all are guilty of adultery and other heinous sins. Vima especially makes fun of the hypocrisy and false righteous arrogance of the upper caste. (70^{th} canto) Any notions of gender or caste based superiority is thus summarily rejected by the kali yuga myth. Simultaneously, the myth reveals contradictory elements. Traditional tropes of upper caste discourses on kali yuga find their way into Bhima's narrative. The chaos of kali yuga is lamented in terms of a pervasive break down of caste hierarchy and inter caste relationships leading to social anarchy (70^{th} canto). Similarly, the usual representation of women in the classical kali yuga literature is reiterated in *Stuti Chintamani.* Women are associated with sexual excess bordering on perversion and an urgent note of caution is issued to men.

The divided consciousness of Bhima is focused on the local and the present. The contemporary in all its complexities is mapped out carefully—it is this description that supports Bhima's apocalyptic narrative about the future. The causal relationship between the two is especially highlighted in this form of 'historiography'. The careful monitoring of the present and the consequent projections into the future are deeply informed by a conviction that the end of kali yuga has begun; Kalki, the final incarnation of Vishnu has arrived in the form of Mahima Gosain; and the final apocalyptic battle and the return to satya yuga is imminent. Further, the advent of satya yuga is perceived from both the individual's and the community's view points.

Stuti Chintamani arrays the popular perceptions of and attitude towards the poet-leader as well as the embattled Mahimaite community. Bhima's tribal identity and life style invite frequent upper caste censure (62nd, 63rd cantos); Mahima dharma is summarily rejected by the upper rungs of the feudal set up on the grounds that it is a lower caste religion and also because popular perception conceives it as a form of Christianity (68th canto). Bhima's Mahimaite identity and practices draw him into conflict with establishments of 'feudal' power; the palpable socio-religious tension surfaces beautifully in the autobiographical narrative. This focus on the referential present is operative in the text even while the narrative is firmly rooted within the traditional Hindu frame work of cyclical time, of yuga cycles. On the basis of the present, the version of the future, of the imminent satya yuga is defined and displayed.

The version of the future is defined in terms of the aspirations of the Mahimaite community largely consisting of lower caste populace. Thus, "the four fold varna hierarchy will be chased out" in the satya yuga (10th canto). The myth of satya yuga also alters gender equations drastically; women will have an exalted position as producers of knowledge systems; men will acquire jnana from women (24th canto). However, the myth of satya yuga constructed in *Stuti Chintamani* is not properly accounted for until one underlines

the elements of traditional discourse inherent in it. Thus, there will be an exaltation in the position of women in satya yuga but simultaneously they will be more reverential to their men. The stringent anti caste voice, at times, mellows down and adopts a tone of compromise. A Brahmin, practicing Vedic rituals – the breeding ground of caste hierarchies – is allowed a passage to satya yuga along with his Vedic practices provided that he accepts the supremacy of Mahima (90th canto). The voice of compromise does not perceive any contradiction between the practices of satya dharma and of Vedic rituals. Thus, the satya yuga myth is both the locus of a compromise and a projected solution. The ambivalence is typical of Bhima's divided consciousness. (20)

In *Stuti Chintamani* various self images are evoked through references to the body. It would be useful to focus on the various notions of the body operative in *Stuti Chintamani*. It will enable us to further analyze the ways in which Bhima's autobiographical narrative becomes the literary site of a dialogue between tradition and modernity. Often in the text, the body is spoken of in the Sankhya terminology of sthula (gross) and suksma sharira (subtle body). According to Sankhya formulations the subtle body is inseparably connected with the Purusa or spirit. It has a separate existence from the womb born, gross body. The latter alone falls at the time of death, the subtle body survives and forms the vehicle of the transmigratory spirit. Thus in Sankhya discourse the idea of the body is poised between the larger notions of spirit and matter, Purusa and Prakriti (A.G.K. Warrier 1975:8).

This discourse on the body finds its way into *Stuti Chintamani*. Bhima reveals that he has "a pair of bodies" (45th canto). The body is spoken of as a forest in the clutches of Prakriti (39th canto). Divine violence is invited on to the body as it will assure a release from Prakriti (12th canto). In fact, a notion of the body as sinful is particularly acute in the narrative (73rd canto). Consequently, a palpable hatred for the gross, material body is pronounced in the text.

Apart from Sankhya, the Gaudia Vaisnava discourse also

regulates certain images of the body displayed in the narrative. Bhima often perceives himself to be a Vaisnava since Mahima Gosain is believed to be the final incarnation of Visnu (64th canto). Gaudiya Vaisnavism widely prevalent in medieval Orissa, encourages the male devotee to develop love for Krisna in the feminine mood of the gopis. The assumption of a female identity by the male devotee is seen less as an act of role playing, more as a technique to gain access to one's original identity of a gopi in Vrindavan, "divorced from the illusions associated with the body and mind of this world" (J.S.Rosen 1996 : 124). *Stuti Chintamani* testifies to Bhima's veiled identification with the gopis (17th canto). Probably such identification with the gopis of Vrinadavan stimulated hagiographic accounts that celebrate Bhima as the incarnation of Radha (A.B. Mohanty 1950: 4).

Bhima's identification with female figures, however, continues outside the context of the Vaisnava tradition also. Curiously he identifies with those women of traditional myths who have had experiences of humiliating coercion. For instance, he identifies with Draupadi and her experience of coercion in the royal assembly; with Ahalya and with Sita and their humiliations. (16th canto) It can be argued that Bhima's personal humiliating experiences are spoken of through an act of identification with these mythological female figures and their experiences of coercion. Thus, he experiences "sinful slandering tongues" as a coercive penetration of the body. Bhima also speaks of his experiences of coercion more directly and without an identification with female figures. On a number of occasions Bhima remembers and relates how his body has been subjected to severe physical punishment on account of his Mahimaite identity (20th canto). Here mythographic transcription, in continuation with referential invocation of pain, serves to constitute a distinctly modern image of the body as a site of coercion.

Theorists of social suffering such as Veena Das approach pain as a socially constructed reality. Pain can be perceived from two different angles: either as the medium through which society establishes its ownership over the individual and individuals assert

their membership in a community or as the form available to the individual to represent the tension in the contractual relationship between the community and the individual. In the latter case, pain creates a sense of person-hood and the individual resists incorporation into the society. In both the situations, pain is the medium through which a form of memory is created that is inscribed on the body (V. Das 1995: 178).

For an analysis of *Stuti Chintamani* the latter hypothetical situation holds much significance. For Bhima, social suffering or pain creates a memory that is inscribed on the body. The way the body is spoken of as the site of coercion, the manner in which the body is figured as undergoing a coercive penetration, testify to it. The pain and the memory serve to create a rupture between the individual and the community. This rupture surfaces acutely in Bhima's apocalyptic vision in terms of an undisguised enmity towards the non Mahimaites (24th canto).

The image of the body as a site of coercion can be properly analyzed in the context of the dominant discourse of danda vidhi prevalent in the feudatory states of the nineteenth century Orissa. Often it aimed at a cruel mutilation/disfiguration of the body of the socio-political dissenter, of the 'criminal'. As a newspaper article in the Utkal Dipika dated twelfth June, 1875 on the danda vidhi or the disciplinary practices in the feudatory states reveals, the preferred mode of punishment was a mutilation of the body in a number of ways such as forcibly pulling out the moustache, burning off the fingers, sexual brutalization etc.(21) Socio-political dissent was thus literally carried by the brutalized body. As early as 1814 the British government was uneasy about the practice of such danda vidhi and the office of the Tributary Mahals was established in 1814 to rein in the feudatory chief's administrative power and prevent such disciplinary practices (S.C. Padhy 199 : 28).

We have already noticed that the autobiographical narrative registers Bhima's hatred for the womb born sthula sharira. As opposed to this, the narrative also reveals an affectionate concern for the well being of the material body. The idea that the body will

not be afflicted by a process of decay if one takes refuge in the Mahima dharma is reiterated through out the text (39th canto). Bhima praises his body as it has successfully survived severe beatings and torture. (22nd canto) Moreover, in the poet's religious imagination, the purified and sinless state of the self is characterized by a lustrous and beautiful body (77th canto). Vima's emotional investment in such intimate and affectionate concern for the body can perhaps be properly understood when we look at his concern with the well being of the body as a form of resistance to the dominant discourse of punishment prevalent in the feudatory states that emphasized mutilation of the body as a disciplinary practice.

V

In conclusion, let me sum up the various arguments presented above. The purpose of the introduction was not only to hint at the continuing appeal of *Stuti Chintamani* but also to situate the narrative in the context of different socio-political discourses of the time in which it was composed and to analyze the manner in which Bhima responds to the dominant cultural forces of his location. This exploration is poised in the context of the advent of modernity in the hinterlands, in the non-middle class cultural space of the nineteenth century Orissa which altered traditional ways of speaking about the self, received modes of perceiving the body, the ecology and customary notions of time. The introduction of the industrial mode of resource use by the colonial administration resulted in an alienation of the self from its ecology. Bhima's identity project responded to it by portraying nature in a state of anxiety over its well being, in a state of stunted fertility and by identifying with this image of nature. With the emphasis on the commodification and consumption of resources and the development of a money economy, the institution of market and the social groups associated with it grew into prominence. Consequently a cultural idiom developed centering around the market economy that informs Bhima's portrayals of God and the body. Besides, the palpable tension between the different economic strata is registered in *Stuti*

Chintamani which simultaneously records Mahima dharma as the embodiment of a popular desire for upward economic mobility. In the context of the valorization of the Kshatriya caste by the colonial administration and the processes of rapid peasantization and Hinduization of the tribal in nineteenth century Orissa, Bhima's identity project reveals a desire to appropriate the cultural practices of the upper castes, especially the Kshatriyas. Simultaneously, Bhima attempts to construct the discourse of an alternative social classification that over-rides the classical four fold varna system. This attempt highlights a curious combination of Bhima's traditional mythographic vision and a referential documentation of the social, of the contemporary, which also informs Bhima's construction of the kali yuga myth. While operating within the traditional framework of cyclical time, Bhima is able to referentially document contemporary society. Finally, while functioning within the traditional discourse of Sankhya and Vaisnava philosophy, Bhima constructs a modern image of the body as the site of coercion.

Notes

1. While studying the social structures of the cult in the early 1970s, A. Eschmann found that roughly 67% of the followers belonged to the chasa (farmers) or allied castes (kaivarta, gopala etc.), about 8% were tribal. The number of Harijan followers corresponded nearly to that of the Brahmins. Both constituted about 4%. Eschmann's pioneering work focused on one denomination of the followers, namely, the Balkaladhari group. Bhima belonged to another denomination—the Kaupinadharis. She suggests that the participation of the tribal in the latter group would be higher.
2. Eschmann observes that since 1881, the cult has spread beyond the borders of Orissa and spilled over into the neighboring political and linguistic zones. She compiled the following figures to throw some light on its spread:

State	Asrama or Tungi of Balkaladhari	of Kaupinadhari	Total
Orissa	777	595	1372
Andhra Pradesh	40	46	86
Madhya Prasesh	8	—	8
Bihar	1	—	1
Bengal	—	65	65
Assam	—	51	51

3. For the biographical sketch I have primarily relied on my field work conducted during the summers of 2002 and 2003. The works of other scholars have been cited when they have been relied on.
4. There are several opinions regarding the date and place of Bhima's birth. Instead of arguing for any one particular view, I have chosen to adopt a holistic stance. See P. M. Nayak 2001:100. Recent works by Ishita Banerjee Dube are also immensely significant.
5. There are contesting speculations as to whether Bhima was blind. While some scholars observe that the poet was born blind, others contest that he was not at all visually challenged. Yet another group asserts that though the poet was not born blind, he lost his eyesight due to some mishap in early youth. See S. Mahapatra 1983: 7.
6. Saraswati and Subarna were the other consorts of the poet. See P. M. Nayak 2001:105.
7. My interview with one Nidhi Rana belonging to a potter caste family of Khaliapali village yielded further information regarding the entry of women into Bhima's establishment. Rana revealed that his preceding generations had migrated to Khaliapali at the behest of Bhima. The potter family catered to the needs of the monastery and was given some land to survive on. Rana claimed that his family had given a daughter to the ashram.
8. In total, the monastery had about fifty seven acres of land; about thirty two acres in Khaliapali mouza (khata no. 50 and 51); nearly twenty five in Rayapali mouza (khata no. 8). Earlier

the property was registered in the name of Hari and Vasu Panda, and was accorded the status of debottar sampatti. According to a settlement of 1963, the property passed onto Shriya Devi, a descendant of the Panda brothers who also used to reside in the monastery. Later, the land in the Rayapalli mouza, donated by Mohundas to Bhima, was taken away from the monastery as per the ceiling procedures of the government. This information is based on my interviews with the descendants of Mohundas as well as Mr. Prafulla Dash, the secretary of the Bhima Bhoi Samadhi Peetha Trust, Khaliapali.

9. Interviews with the secretary of the Bhima Bhoi Samadhi Peetha Trust yields this information.
10. It is preserved in the monastery along with other memorabilia.
11. The letter was written by the assistant secretary to the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces (no. 3069-161), dated 17 August 1881 refers to the ritual.
12. I underline my gratitude to Mr. Kedar Misra of Sonepur for drawing my attention to Census Report of 1911, Religion, Chapter IV, and p.212. See P M Nayak's (2001) references to C. E. Buckland's *Bengal under Lieutenant Governors* and B C Mozumdar's *Sonepur in the Sambalpur Tract*. The *Utkal Dipika* reported the incident on 13th March 1881.
13. I refer to the letter of the assistant secretary to the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces (no.3069-161) dated 17 August 1881 and the report published in the *Utkal Dipika* on the 19th November 1881.
14. A letter to the *Utkal Dipika* dated 17.03.1883, written by one Damodar Pattanaik, the editor of a journal called *Sangeet Sagar* observes, "...this dharma has not contributed to the development of the society in any significant way. Due to the predominance of lowly and uncivilized people this dharma has lost its name and glory."
15. I am indebted to my discussions with Dr. Devendra Kumar Dash.
16. Some scholars feel that the king of Sonepur had initially adopted

a liberal, even favorable attitude towards Bhima. But they fail to account for the change in the royal perception as regards the poet later on. See P M Nayak 2001: 103

17. See P M Nayak 2001: 95. Nayak quotes extensively from the General Review of Administration of Feudatory States of Central Provinces, 1891, on the dramatic death of the king. The final show down between the followers of Bhima and the local ruling elite can be seen in the larger context of the land structures of the state. From Cobden Ramsay's observations, it seems that the state's land could be divided into two categories: those directly owned and managed by the king and those belonging to five small zamindars of the state. The zamindars were all Khonds and Binjhals. They paid tribute to the king and the tribute was liable to revision. The land owned by the king was leased out with the gauntia / thikadar, garhatia, and biratia. The garhatia villages paid only urad and ghee as tax, rendered less bethi or free labor; these tenants belonged mostly to the militia or paik class and in the absence of the king, acted as guards in the garh or the palace. The biratia tenants were all Brahmins who received their villages on special terms: in some cases they were, or their ancestors were, the original founders of the villages. They paid tax on a reduced scale and were ritually tied to the king. On fixed occasions they gave coconuts and the sacred thread to the king and at Dasahara came for sixteen days to celebrate the festival at the garh. The most distant position from the garh was occupied by the gauntia or the land holding farmers. And ironically they paid the bulk of the state's tax in kind, that is, they paid rice apart from urad and ghee; were more prone to free labor etc. It seems that the relation between the king in the garh and the gauntias, was politically and economically the most fragile and sensitive. Bhima himself belonged to the tribe of the Khonds and all his prominent supporters including his father in law, belonged to the class of the gauntias. Their presence in the garh to undergo the fire trial on behalf their

guru was also the presence of the politically most volatile group of farmers in the garh. This class was registering a gesture of protest. The dialogue between the king and the peasants was expressed through the terms and notions of purity, alleged immoral practices, agni pariksha and sainthood etc. Yet the dialogue also belonged to the realm of land relations and all possible tensions inherent in the attendant forms of social stratification.

18. See P M Nayak 2001: 106.
19. It can be argued that Bhima's subjective position, ambivalently poised between the opposing urges to imitate and resist the feudal ways earned him disrepute in the larger Mahimaite community. It has already been noted that Bhima imitated vital cultural formulations integral to the feudal set up such as caste based claims of divine purity and military valor. Referentially speaking, he acquired a sizeable property, married, led a family life and 'participated' in the feudal set up unlike any other Mahimaite leader of comparable stature. This 'participation' was against the predominant practice prevalent in other Mahimaite centers, in the larger Mahimaite movement. Also see P M Nayak 2001: 106.
20. I am deeply grateful to Dr. Gauranga Dash for drawing my attention to the article in the Utkal Dipika.

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Canto I

All hail the Luminous One,
whose flag flies high in the sky,
victory to Him!
Full of mercy, the Formless Lord
wipes off sorrows of devotees. (1)

My grief knows no bound
O Lord,
with my face buried in my palms,
deeply anxious I wonder
If You will rescue me. (4)

Alas,
what a number of tricks,
Formless Govinda plays on me!
What acute suffering
on me He inflicts! (7)

What severe miseries
He heaps on me!
Alas, how I burn with grief!
O Lord,
what an irony
that You are known as
the saviour of devotees ? (8)

If in me You find flaws;
if I have strayed from
truth and righteousness,
put me to the sword. (9)

I do not bow to gods and goddesses,
to idols of clay and stone.
O Lord,
in search of liberation,
I meditate on You. (12)

If You forsake me,
helpless in hard times,
never shall I find a shelter
anywhere in the universe.
You will earn a bad name. (13)

The more I speak of my misery,
the greater is my grief.
Sorrow pervades my heart.
The soul cries out;
my health, too, is indifferent. (15)

A mere insect,
a low and mean creature,
I seek refuge in You.
With folded hands I plead,
O Shri Hari,
Take pity on me. (18)

May Your glory last forever.
Mean Vima, out of ignorance,
speaks ill of the Lord.
O Lord,
in You I take refuge. (20)

Canto II

O Lord,
why do You abandon me,
and leave me helpless?
What faults of mine
have You taken to heart?
O Hari, You who feed on Your devotee's life,
cruel and merciless is Your heart. (1)

What I think and how I feel
deep in my heart,
You know it all.
Why are You furious then ?
What fame will You earn
by feasting on a devotee's life? (2)

Devotees hail You as the Great Lord.
Yet, You stoop to play tricks on me!
O how You harass me!
"Ocean of Compassion"—
this title of Yours,
proves utterly hollow! (3)

This precious body of mine
cannot bear severe punishment,
day in and day out.
O Lord,
I humbly surrender
both body and soul to You. (7)

My trust in You wavers.
For once, listen to my pleas.

May You come and light,
in my troubled heart,
the sacred flame of Brahman. (8)

O Father of the universe,
You are revered all over.
Swear by Yourself,
You'll put Yourself to test,
for the sake of Your devotee. (11)

The Lord writes my fate,
and I pass my days.
I know not
what I have done
to deserve this.
Miserable always,
I live on alms.
To my unseen fate, I bow. (16)

Times are bad,
signs are ominous.
Death and mishaps
lie in wait.
A look, full of mercy,
from Lord Almighty
will blow away perils all. (17)

Canto III

O Formless Brahman,
my body burns,
and so does my heart.
Now, I weep inconsolate;
now peaceful at heart,
I wipe my tears off. (3)

I know my Lord,
the tricks you play on me
For once, tell me,
when will I achieve
the final release?
How long will I bear
this terrible suffering?
Do not you know,
it hurts me to the quick.
(4)

Helpless I am:
alone from birth
and friendless in action.
Guiltless I am.
Yet You punish me
without a reason.
The sun and moon are my witness. (7)

O Formless Brahman,
You are the Ocean of compassion.
You are a friend to the devotee.
O Glory, forgive me;
set me free from the prison. (17)

I abused You in a fit of anger.
How intemperate of me !
May You not take it to heart,
may You not be furious with me.
Thus, begs mean and ignorant Vima,
O Lord, forgive me. (20)

Canto IV

There is none in the universe,
more sinful, more foolish than me.
Disconsolate in my grief,
I slandered His Majesty
with my mortal tongue,
and sinful imagination. (2)

Aggrieved at heart,
I became arrogant.
A foolish *chandaal* am I.
O Formless Void,
You are manifest as
dazzling lustre. (3)

Day and night,
the river courses through the region,
where there is no sun, no moon.
It is the river of Brahman.
Be careful,
if you are guilty of sloth,
your raft will drown. (5)

O Lord,
my limbs are afflicted;
I cannot move.
Sorrows and miseries
never leave me alone.
Have a heart!
Give me shelter in the boat,
and see me safely to the shore. (6)

What incantations do I chant?
How do I meditate?
How do I become His slave?
Infinite are
pilgrimages and rituals
that lead up to the Lord. (11)

O Lord,
in You I take refuge.
May You be my Saviour.
O formless Govinda —
the One beyond illumination,
victory to You. (16)

Canto V

Where shall I go?
Where shall I find a shelter?
I do not really know.
Unruly *maya* assaults
again and yet again.
How long shall I bear it? (1)

O Lord,
I am Your humble slave
ever since I was born.
Yet, You dash my hopes,
with an easy indifference!
There is no lamp.
You keep the house dark;
how dismal it looks! (3)

Tell me,
how would it look
if he who arranges
a meet of saints and sages
himself lacks
piety and conscience.
What joys will he get
who sets up a house
but does not have a wife
to look after it. (4)

He who has neither land nor riches,
is helpless before the king,
the *brahmins* and the gods. (6)

When fire and water
contend against air;
when there is bitter enmity
between the elements;
what huge waves will come invading!
O Lord,
how will You protect the world then? (8)

What will be that sight
when the lustrous sun will not rise;
and the moon does not shine at night! (9)

The earth will break into pieces.
There will be no *pradhan,* no king.
Inauspicious things will happen.
The royal retainers will wander berserk:
molesting even the widows. (10)

Canto VI

Nothing did exist then.
Neither the earth nor the elements.
Not even time: origin or dissolution.
There was only the Great Void –
formless and unnamable. (1)

From the Void, a wordless sphere,
emerged the word –
Param Brahman
the One with and without attributes. (3)

A thousand petals
sprouted from the word '*swaha*'
and formed the garden.
The Name 'Adi-Brahman'
echoed all over the word-less sphere. (3)

There is no sun, no moon
where the liberated soul goes to.
Vasudev – the name is revealed and hailed
all over the world. (6)

In the form and the formless,
both outside and inside,
You exist every where.
O Father of the living,
O Guru who provides for all,
You look after both good and evil. (13)

What powers do I have
to chant the Supreme Name

It is beyond the pale of time,
of human imagination as well;
it is beyond words,
how can it be chanted ? (14)

With what passion
I searched for Him
in words and letters!
Alas, how futile and in vain!
Now I focus on the Name.
No more of going astray;
for good I've turned away
from everything else.
I am mad for Him
who has no form. (15)

The Lord never stains.
Muck and mire
leave no mark on Him.
He is the One
whose desires are fulfilled.
Inaccessible and impassable
is His sphere
striking terror
in the heart of the traveller. (16)

A painful life from birth,
ignorant in the knowledge of Vedas,
Vima seeks refuge in the Guru
and sings praise to the Formless. (20)

Canto VII

Some focus on the form;
follow the scriptures.
Indeed, some grow
emotional in their devotion.
O Lord, through rites and rituals,
You are prayed for
fortune and prosperity.
You are the Saviour of the distressed. (4)

The wise dismiss the form,
take refuge in the Formless
and sail across.
The saints call You Hari,
the ocean of compassion. (9)

The devotees
who crave for your mercy,
worship You in different ways,
and receive what they desire.
They call you Gunanidhi—
the Ocean of virtues. (6)

O Lord,
You are the Ocean of compassion.
Why do You act so miserly then ?
You are called Kalpataru —
the tree that fulfils wishes.
Its green beauty
is without a parallel. (18)

"My days pass by
in prayers and penance"
so says Bhima, the Kondh,
in a tearful voice,
as he meditates on the Lord. (20)

Canto VIII

I wander here and there,
indifferent to worldly affairs.
You gave me birth on the earth,
blessed me with the vision of a poet.
Now, do not blame me later,
if what I say causes a flutter. (1)

Its true, beyond all doubts.
Lord Nilagiri – Jagannath
resides on the Blue Mountain.
So say the Vedas, scriptures all. (3)

Silent He sits,
famous as the Darupratima.
In my heart of hearts
I yearned for Him. (4)

From afar I came.
Having performed.
my morning ablutions
I went for his *darshan*
and was enchanted
by His beauty.
He sits on a round pedestal,
hailed as Chakadola –
the Round Eyed One. (5)

On the occasion of
the *bada simhar vesha,*

He is decked up
in finery and flowers.
Even a million suns
pale in comparison.
He is the Name.
The eternal Brahman. (7)

Your union with *Prakriti*
created the world.
From being nameless,
You acquired a name;
from being Formless,
You took up a form.
Fondly, people call you Krishna –
the one who dances beneath the *kadamba* tree. (11)

How charming his chignon looks
decorated with flowers!
How colourfully He dances!
As He sports in Vrindavan,
He is called Vanamali. (14)

Canto IX

O Lord,
smite the sorrows of devotees
with the sword of knowledge.
You have created the world
with the mud and mire of *Prakriti.*
Hence You are known as Mayadhar. (4)

You witness all
without fail.
Your merciful eyes
never discriminate,
and protect all.
You are the Lotus-eyed – One,
who seldom looks stern. (7)

He is neither male nor female.
He is well beyond time's pale.
Justly, He is called Dasarathi –
the sight of whom
fills one with bliss. (10)

He is also known as Nitai Chaitanya.
As he sang in praise of the Lord,
His parents named him
Satya-keshab and Jagajivan. (14)

O Lord,
in a sportive whim
you write human fate,
infuse *Prakriti* into the elements,
and orchestrate *maya.* (17)

The world is precious
so is the human form.
Alas, what utter ruin both face!
O Lord,
the one without a beginning,
You deceive me. (18)

Canto X

O Lord,
Hiranya swelled with pride;
anger and arrogance
made up his crime.
You tore him to pieces
in the form of Narasimha. (4)

To the King of demons
You went seeking alms
in the form of a dwarf,
and relieved him of
his riches all. (6)

O Nameless Brahman
You took birth as Rama
in the house of Dasaratha;
slayed Ravan,
and rescued Janaki. (7)

In the age of Dwapar
Vasudev was your father.
You grew up in Gopa,
killed Kamsa, and
unburden the world. (8)

O saints and sages,
look with the eyes of *jnana*,
and in the mode of *anubhav* –
how nectar drips down
from the Nameless One !

With a true heart,
come and partake. (12)
The Lord and his Kshatriya followers,
all armed with swords and spears
will roam about the earth.
In the twenty first year,
the world will be tamed, for sure.
The flag of the brave will fly high. (13)

He will rout evil and uphold *dharma*
when satya dawns after kali,
the Lord will become the king,
and will look after his people. (14)

Blessed by Him,
the clever and the foolish
will attain knowledge,
real and true.
Chaste and obedient,
will be the women,
once they know,
what is Brahman. (16)

The four forms of
karma and *dharma*
will surely flourish.
The hierarchy of *chaubarga*
will forever perish.
All will worship Laxmi,
and with rewards shall be blessed. (17)

Canto XI

The whole of creation,
spread over the universe,
is about to be drowned.
O how anxious am I
to swim across to safety ! (1)

Alas! however,
the roaring tides rush in.
In this all pervasive darkness,
I see no flicker of light.
How will I escape? (3)

O Lord, my master,
the deepest of my desires
are not unknown to you.
I have none but you,
to come to my rescue.
Kindly find out how
to protect me now,
in this perilous world. (4)

Fate eggs me on
along the path of sin.
Just as a temptress
seduces an adulterer. (5)

The wicked world
torments me a lot.
Its vicious nature
beggars my words.

It's but a creation
of my Lord,
yet it dares
play tricks on me ! (6)

O you mortal tongues, full of slander
what enmity, towards me you harbour!
If Father Creator comes to know,
to utter ruin you all go.
Do not blame me then. (8)

O foolish men,
ignorant demons,
come and embrace
satya dharma.
Continue to defame
the Name of the Lord,
You will stay trapped
in the web of *maya*,
and will perish soon. (9)

People dwelling on
this island of Jambu
dare decline to seek
refuge in the Name!
It bewilders me;
how will they
sail across! (12)

A foolish, mad demon is he
who seeks not satya dharma.
In the vicious web of maya,
he is most pitiably trapped.
Hence O wise souls
do the needful,
before it's too late. (13)

Canto XII

O Lord,
I trust You completely.
I am ignorant;
a heinous sinner,
I hope,
the compassionate One
will come to my rescue. (1)

O Nameless One,
again and again,
I beseech You:
do not prolong
my life on earth.
Yet O Lord,
my plea goes unheard;
Why do You punish me so?
May Your sacred arms
end my life. (8)

Greed, ignorance, and lust;
anger and arrogance—
You created them all.
They scorch my soul
day in and day out. (11)

You gave me birth
on this earth;
made me helpless
in face of maya.
With what acute pain

I carry my mortal frame!
O Lord,
may all my sins be burnt off. (12)

Because of *karma*,
my suffering continues,
yuga after yuga,
birth after birth.
Shameless is my soul.
It does not discard
this sinful body
made of *Prakriti*. (13)

This mortal frame
is fickle by nature.
Assaults of *Prakriti*
are truly fierce.
O Lord,
with Your fatal sword,
butcher this body to pieces. (17)

Canto XIII

The blade of grass prays,
"O Lord,
let the cow graze me,
but let me not be rooted out;
let me not be
burnt in fire." (9)

Trees pray,
"O Lord,
the storm sweeps all before it.
We pray with folded hands,
let not our limbs be broken." (10)

"O Lord,
I do not have the power to move.
If I am not blessed
with Your compassion,
thunder will crash on me;
and I will be ground to dust,"
thus, prays the stone. (11)

The beasts of the woods
tremble with fear.
Humbly they plead
for protection from
the ferocious tigers and bears. (13)

O Lord,
You are known to be
the Protector of devotee.

Day after day,
I appeal and pray.
My pleas, however,
fall on Your deaf ear.
Your heart of stone
is praiseworthy, indeed! (16)

It is getting dark;
night will fall shortly;
come in for supper.
Once the lamp goes out,
it will become dark,
the temple will fall vacant. (17)

When supper is over,
rinse Your mouth,
and come to bed.
I will stay awake
through the night;
and pray, with Your feet
clasped in my arms. (18)

Canto XIV

The day my Lord
lighted the sacred fire,
I realized for sure,
the *yuga* is about to end,
and was overwhelmed with fear. (1)

Anxiously I thought:
things which were never seen,
are happening now.
What will become of this world?
the Lord our Protector—
what is He doing? (2)

In the guise of an ascetic,
the Lord of the Universe
wanders here and there
without a moment's respite.
When Adi-Brahman, the Father,
suffers so much,
what do I care about myself? (3/4)

The whole of creation
will perish in maya.
The market of the world
will come to a close.
Angry and indifferent
will be the Gods
during the thirteenth
and the fourteenth years. (6)

My handful of rice
changes its colour
as they throw dirt into it.
Tortured by thirst
as I seek water,
they snatch the tumbler
away from me. (7)

Whatever they
think and say
is utterly false.
The courtiers all
turn justice
on its head,
and declare then
who is the winner,
who is the loser. (8)

He is the Protector.
He is the Destroyer.
He sustains the *yuga*
He is the auspicious One.
Him apart,
my imagination knows
no other Lord. (15)

Canto XV

The living and the life-less,
the insects and the flies,
are all followers of the Lord.
He is equally manifest in all. (1)

Only through devotion
can one find Him.
He is truly 'tamed'
by none but the devotee.
O Lord,
why do You not
respond to my prayers?
What fault of mine
has incurred Your wrath? (2)

Ignoring Your word,
abandoning the path of devotion
have I trodden any other path?
O Lord,
what faults of mine
have You taken to heart? (3)

You pretend not to hear my pleas;
You inflict severe punishments on me;
From me You have moved away ,
and turned indifferent.

O Lord Alekh,
when will I be blessed
with a soothing shower of mercy?

When will I see
the dawn of Your Yuga?
How long will You keep me
confined in the deep woods? (5)

All my life,
I am afflicted with misery.
Acute poverty,
never leaves me.
Yet, great are my hopes.
People are startled to see,
the heights I have scaled;
the fortune that I enjoy. (6)

I hardly have enough
to feed and clothe myself.
O Lord,
When, after all,
on this lowly creature
You will have mercy.
(7)

One's desires are but his foes:
conquer on nurture
the choice is yours.
O Lord,
in my heart of hearts,
I measure my strength
against desires of flesh. (9)

The Great One, the Prime Mover—
O Lord, such titles of Yours
prove to be misnomers.
You have bestowed on me
a mortal human body.
But You have not bothered
to provide for it—
is this justice? (10)

Canto XVI

How will I get
the riches I desire:
I have earned it not
in my previous birth. (1)

The wicked crocodile
assailed and trapped
the elephant in water.
O Lord,
You slew the reptile,
with your disc
and rescued the tusker. (6)

Just like the crocodile,
ominous web of *maya*
has trapped me tight.
Only,
much more vicious
is its seizure!
May the merciful Lord
put an end
to my miseries all. (7)

Rapacious Ravan
abducted Sita
during Your exile
in the woods deep.
O Lord,
You bridged the sea,
slew the demon,
and rescued her. (10)

Alone in *Ashok-van*,
Sita suffered
the coercive advances of Ravan.
O Lord, for once,
come to my rescue
as a true friend.
Lead me out
of this dark and pathless forest. (11)

Duhshasan dragged in
the daughter of Drupada;
tried to coerce and disrobe her.
You came to her rescue,
You clothed her and saved her honour. (12)

This kali yuga,
the sinful slandering tongues
inflict on me
the kind of suffering
that was inflicted on Draupadi.
It penetrates me.
O Lord, destroy it. (13)

She was coerced by Indra.
Lost in lamentations,
She pleaded with her husband;
but, was turned into a statue.
You came to her rescue. (16)

Just like her, O Lord,
I am lost in lamentations.
O Dayanidhi, fulfill my desire:
let me partake of the Ocean of Bliss. (17)

A luck-less woman,
ignorant and sinful
I do harbour

desires and greed.
Have pity on me,
endow me with *khanja-mula:*
may I pass my days in peace. (19)

With his palms folded
Vima, the orphan,
begs for a boon.
O Lord, O Guru,
grant me this much:
may I truly observe
the *dharma* of a householder
without fail.

(20)

Canto XVII

What I have thought,
will remain forever
locked in my heart.
Barring me,
none in the world,
will come to know about it.
What is Your command?
(3)

In the country of Panchal,
Arjuna, in disguise, pierced the target.
You blessed the Pandavs,
with Draupadi's hand,
and initiated a war. (4)

Smitten by His beauty
were the rishis in *tretaya*
when they saw Rama during
His coronation at Ayodhya. (7)

O Formless Void,
You fulfilled their desire.
They were reborn as
the women of Braj.
Safe from the prying eyes,
You sported with them. (8)

Ceaseless is my anxiety.
If Hari wants,
I will sail across
the ocean of grief. (9)

Born into this world
with a mortal body,
sincerely I follow
the path of yoga.
Yet, O Lord,
a heinous sinner I am,
forever and ever.
I trade in Your Name;
I dare sing of You
in my worldly compositions. (14)

Burdened with sorrow,
perpetual and unbearable,
I seek refuge,
under the banner of the Void.
In the boat of His blessings,
humbly I hope
to sail across the waters. (15)

Alas, however,
He takes on
different hues
and plays tricks on me.
I know not,
how will I sail
through the Ocean of tears. (16)

With what great speed
water rushes in!
it splits branches,
and uproots trees.
What vicious whirlpools
it forms indeed,
and sweeps me away! (17)

Canto XVIII

Lord is formless,
beyond words.
Speaking of Him is like,
tasting Him with mortal tongue.
Who then dares
describe the Lord?
My tongue moves no more. (2)

I do not have
the memory, the imagination,
or even the desire
to portray Him.
Visible He is
to the eyes of wisdom;
these mortal eyes
can never see Him. (3)

Where ever each of them were,
fate brought them together.
Father and mother,
resolved to procreate,
came together to copulate. (9)

In solitude,
both the bodies became one.
Just as,
in the rainy season,
the river bursts its banks and flows over. (10)

Mother set up the market of love,
displayed her peddler's basket

and bought the best.
Day after day,
father gained in the trade
and bestowed the *Brahman.* (11)

Devotion to the Lord
earns one *punya* and *dharma.*
By virtue of many a life
spent in prayers and penance,
this body is brought into being. (12)

When the flame of life goes out,
this forsaken form becomes useless.
Yet, gods in heaven,
pray and strive for
precious human incarnation. (14)

However much
I yearn for happiness,
it comes to naught.
Conscienceless fate
writes the course of my life. (15)

It dashes my hopes
without fail:
others get ripe fruits,
unripe ones fall in my lot! (16)

The living I was born into,
the customs of the world
did not augur well for me.
Discerning evil karma,
written on my brow,
O Lord, You ordained this. (19)

Canto XIX

The trial is yet to begin.
With saintly arrogance,
false and hollow,
they claim, however,
"One cannot steal
the fruits of another's *karma*
Each is on his own
at the time of the deluge." (3)

The Lord be praised.
He will surely sift
the good grains of rice
from the rotten ones. (5)

Delicate finery adorn
the peddler's basket.
What an illusion!
Fata at fruit,
though luscious to look at,
carries charcoal within. (6)

When, the banner of the Lord,
flies unfettered
all over the world
and the fire so sacred,
burns uninterrupted;
summon to the foe,
won't unanswered go.
Seeking friendship he will come,
Utterly servile, humble to the core. (7)

O Lord,
if You find me guilty
of adultery, deception,
or of any other crime,
punish me as You wish. (9)

Because of the wealth
amassed from trade,
people have grown
arrogant and harsh.
A pity indeed;
they have fallen into
the well of worldly affairs.
Trapped in maya,
they refuse *satya dharma.* (17)

Canto XX

People abuse me,
call me a Christian.
O Lord,
what acute suffering
on me they inflict
as I worship Alekh. (2)

With a sincere heart
I compose hymns
for the benefit of the world.
Yet, they call me a ghost
as I sing praise to Lord *Abadhuta*. (4)

The powers that be,
oppressive, foolish they are
As I worship *Niskama*
they pluck out any moustache
and ridicule me. (6)

People have turned into criminals.
They tie me with ropes, beat me up.
O Lord, as I worship *Nirguna*,
they chase me out of the village. (7)

In the scriptures they search
for an access to knowledge,
and are utterly perplexed
when they find none.
Yet, when I proclaim

there is but One Brahman
they dare say,
I am deceived. (9)

As I suggest,
do not quarrel,
Never speak a lie,
follow the Guru's word
chant the name of the Lord,
you will come to know
what is Brahman,
people break away. (10)

In these trying times of *kali*
Guru dev has lighted
the fire so sacred
in the ocean of the world.
When I urge them
to gaze upon the fire,
people turn away from afar. (11)

They say,
"to embodied Luster you bow,
then, show us your Guru now."
As I worship the Formless,
they challenge me,
"ask your father
to come and save your skin". (13)

In groups they come
to chase me out;
with what arrogance
do they shout:
"let us see if his Guru
comes to his rescue."
O Lord,
as I worship *Ajapa*,
they denounce me as an untouchable. (14)

With an upturned nose
people do say,
"one does not know
where they used to stay.
Scarcity of rice
has brought these scum
on to the street."
As I extol the path of devotion
what abuse people hurl at me! (15)

In these adverse years of *kali*
people live by fraud.
When I ask them
to strive for the Lord,
they denounce me as a she-demon
who fills up their ears. (16)

They say,
"search the scriptures
find out, in which Veda
is such a future foretold?
His Guru belongs
to the *jati* of moslems.
He eats out of a potshed". (17)

O ignorant sinful creatures,
O you all who deny me a shelter,
and shoo me away from afar!
When I preach one religion for all,
you dare call me a wretched cur! (18)

After being slandered so
my limbs refuse to stir.
Wherever I go,
torrents of abuse follow.
where on earth
will I find a shelter? (19)

Canto XXI

Since childhood, O Lord,
familiar I have been
with acute suffering.
I know not,
what happiness is;
not even for a moment.
I am overwhelmed
with ceaseless anxiety. (2)

Often I used to sit
lonely and forlorn.
Memories of those days
scorch my soul;
I lose consciousness. (4)

I met one summer,
when four years old,
a wandering ascetic—
utterly indifferent
to worldly attachments. (7)

Dressed in a saffron loin cloth,
He looked filthy and uncouth.
I saw on His arms,
signs of the conch and the disc. (8)

A potsherd in hand,
the Lord went begging
along with his companion.
"O mother, o mother",
He called out,
"give me a handful of rice." (9)

Faintly I remember,
as I stood near Him,
the Lord Himself asked me,
"son, fetch me some water." (10)

Gathered in small groups,
people gestured to each other,
and grew restive.
Hence,
with the word '*dharma*' on His lips,
Gurudev left the place.. (11)

At birth,
I lost my father.
How then will I get,
even if I desire,
a bellyful and such other comforts? (16)

At the age of twelve
I became a cowherd.
My days were spent
wandering with the cows
deep in the jungle. (17)

I was often
preoccupied with the past,
and anxious about the future.
Drowned in grief
I used to weep bitterly,
sitting under some tree. (18)

To graze went the cows;
with them I wandered.
Memories of the past
come crashing down
on the body,
so says Bhima Bhoi (20)

Canto XXII

Day after day,
with the cows,
I roamed about the jungle.
Overcome with hunger,
for dear life,
often I drank from the rivulets. (1)

Looking up at the sky,
I used to guess the hour of the day,
and think:
"it is not yet time to return.
If I go back this soon,
I will be given no food today." (2)

This body of mine
deserves to be praised;
it endured much
beating and flogging.
Steadfast at heart
I patiently bore
torrents of abuse. (3)

Many a time,
have I wiped off my face,
tears of blood.
But for the Guru,
no one knows,
how much suffering
I have endured (4)

When I reflect on
the days gone by,

I feel as if,
my body is being sawn into pieces;
as if, an arrow pierces my heart.
Anger overwhelms me. (5)

Thus, I passed my years
till I became fourteen.
I know it well,
how much I suffer,
how I burn within. (6)

I gaze on the Void.
How will I embrace
the Formless One
as I myself drag around
a mortal frame.
Which branch will I hold on to?
They are all beyond my reach.
How will I cross over? (11)

The word of the Guru
is a line engraved in stone.
O Lord,
I distort it,
I tamper with it.
My flesh will come off the bones. (12)

Father and mother,
met and copulated,
and brought me onto the earth.
By virtue of *tapasya*
of the lives past,
I became a poet and a *pundit*. (18)

Mother's womb,
as holy as Gopa-pura;
the time spent therein
is truly unforgettable.
I faintly remember,
in my mother's womb,
I absorbed knowledge. (19)

Canto XXIII

Whether in shine,
or in rain,
He does not take
a moment's rest.
Lord Himself suffers,
to shelter the world. (2)

What will I speak of His pains?
Ignoring hunger and thirst,
the Lord performs yoga
day and night,
for the sake of the devotee. (3)

O you devotees all,
do not worry or lament;
have patience for a while.
In a single day,
the Lord will humble all.
(5)

Unasked He offers
Satya dharma.
O you wise souls
embrace it with open arms.
There will be a new birth
for those who will survive
the thirty-seventh year. (6)

Mired in all manner of sins
the human race will perish;
no one can escape.

From the thirty-seventh
to the forty-eighth year,
the earth will face the heat. (7)

All the amassed riches
will disappear and vanish.
Severe punishment
awaits them all.
For long seven days,
and seven nights,
they will beg for
rice and water,
but in vain. (9)

Fortunate is he,
who has to his credit,
well-performed *tapasya*
of past lives.
In mother's womb,
he receives self-knowledge. (13)

People, all over the world,
tremble in fear
to behold His *Abadhuta* form.
Jati, sati, naganti and *yoganti*
are all alarmed and scared. (18)

Behold now the *Vaisnav* form.
Listen to its wondrous tale.
The *Daru-pratima*, the deities and idols
are now buried deep in the earth. (19)

The world will perish.
No one will survive.
Come and assemble
to pray and worship.
So says Bhima Bhoi
the disciple of *Anadi Guru*. (20)

Canto XXIV

Gurudev, my lord,
will never reveal
who He really is.
Unseen, un-perceived,
He will humble the enemy.
One by one will they perish,
none will be any wiser. (2)

They will burn in fire,
drown in water.
Some will die of snake bites,
some, by falling from trees.
People will be ruthless,
and slit each other's throat. (5)

Scores of diseases,
pain of countless kinds
all have sought
the blessings of the Lord.
They are on prowl
to humble the foe
from the twenty-seventh year. (3)

Eight *crore yoginis*,
nine *crore kantanis*
have received from the Lord,
the command to march. (9)

In a few moments
all will perish.
At daybreak,
it will be seen,
all of a sudden

five or ten
have died in the village,
Thus shall be destruction unleashed. (10)

Village after village
will fall into ruin.
So will be the fate
of *rajya* and *desh*.
In the whole hamlet,
only a few will survive
with the name of *Mahima*
quivering on their lips. (11)

The Lord is a friend to them.
He will come to their rescue
Gathered beneath a single roof,
all will share a cooked meal. (13)

Let us see, at that time
which wretched son of a whore
will cling to his *jati* and *gotra*?
Just wait,
we will take a look at
the rituals of *karma*,
and the doctrine of exclusion. (14)

At the height of *kali yuga,*
households will grow prosperous.
With the onset of deluge
garuda will carry away the riches. (16)

Not for long pride will last
slandering tongues will fall silent.
Satya yuga will return,
women will impart knowledge to men. (18)

Mother Goddess will feast on
cows, buffalos, goats and sheep.
All will perish struck by diseases
Even a single pair of these
will not remain.

Canto XXV

Where will I hide my self?
How will I escape?
How long will I bear
suffering on this earth?
How will I weather
the imminent danger? (1)

I have knowingly kept
tidings of future
from devotees all.
If they happen to know
about the times to come,
they will, for sure,
die of fear. (2)

Yavanas will come invading.
They will raze the woods to ground.
Trees will be felled;
not a single branch or leaf
will escape felling. (3)

Earth will be strewn with corpses.
The stench will be revolting.
Shorn of grass will be the pastures;
fleets of elephants and horses
will be grazing in them. (4)

The kings will shy away from war.
Some of them, however,
will put on a show of bravery,

and will command their retainers—
"resist, o, resist." (5)

None will be able
to bear the blows of battle.
In utter confusion,
people will run
hither and thither
to seek shelter. (6)

The *firingi* will continue
their violent charge.
But will not be able
to win and advance.
They will stay
where they are.
Gods in heaven
will witness all. (7)

Battle cries
will pierce the skies.
The earth will tremble.
For eighteen days,
a river of blood
will course through *Jambu-dwipa*. (8)

Devas, siddhas
suras, asuras
men and women—
none will be able
to stand aloof.
On the thirty seventh year,
earth will witness
wide spread commotion.

Nagantis, yogantis,
vedantis and *siddhantis*—

all will take up arms.
Leaving behind hermitages,
they will jump into war,
and will shout battle cries
just like *kshatriyas*. (10)

Rajarishis, devarishis
rudra rishis and *shudra rishis*,
dressed as brave warriors,
will lead the tumult. (11)

Adi abadhuta, *Ananta abadhuta*, *Rama abadhuta*,
Jagannath abadhuta, Krishna and *Hanumanta abadhuta*,
along with Shiva *abadhuta*, Visnu *abadhuta* and Dharma
abadhuta—
all will be transformed into *Alekh abadhuta*. (13) (14)

The sixtyfour *siddhas*,
countless *sadhus*,
attired in loin clothes,
and armed to the teeth
will play the role
of brave warriors. (15)

The five *Pandavas* will line up for battle.
They will come marching from the north.
Clubs, bows and arrows will become busy;
soldiers will fall to the ground. (16)

These evil times of *kali*,
the high tide of
injustice and mishaps,
will come to an end.
So says Vima Bhoi. (20)

Canto XXVI

In these sinful years of *kali*
the world grows vicious
day by day.
Their unjust customs,
and vile traditions,
will drag men to doom. (14)

For me,
the entire world,
with its nine continents all,
is no more than a plate of clay.
To me,
the whole of creation
with its fifty six crores of living beings,
looks no better than a piece of straw. (16)

In a single day,
I can destroy
the wicked world.
Yet, how can I?
I do not have the permission
of the revered Guru. (17)

If the world is not tamed
in the twenty-seventh year,
o saints and sages,
listen to my course of action;
listen to these rude words of mine. (18)

I swear by the water of *Mahanadi*,
I will transgress *dharma;*
I will drink wine,
and molest *brahmin* women. (19)

Canto XXVII

"Relate the Lord's glory,
light up the sacred fire"—
thus ordained the Guru.
Having bought me as a slave,
having led me half way through,
He has forsaken me
in this sorry state.
Why, o, why? (1)

I have no hope,
no one to rely on.
My courage fails me.
What do I do?
O Lord,
look after this world of Yours,
carry Your own burden. (2)

The suffering of devotees
knows no bound.
Hear, o Lord,
the onus rests on You.
May You bear Your load. (3)

Fortune and misfortune,
freedom and misery—
You have created them in pairs.
Who will carry
the burden of sin and sorrow?
Let it lie at Your feet. (4)

Your devotees
are all in tears.
O venerable Guru,
kindly forgive our sins.
Kindly protect us. (6)

How can I
keep myself aloof
from limitless woe
of all living beings.
O Lord
set them free
from all misery.
In their stead,
may I suffer
in hell forever. (7)

In the saint and the sinner,
in the master and the slave,
in the worm and the insect—
You are manifest in all. (11)

People abuse
and fight each other
over loss and gain,
faults and crimes.
It hurts me deep;
I grieve and lament. (16)

A bone or two,
a drop of blood,
and a lump of flesh—
I carry such a frame
mortal and frail;
how will I then
not grieve over
the ceaseless sorrow
of all living beings! (18)

In the war of *Mahabharat*,
a single blow claimed
as many as ten heads.
However,
I smart in pain,
if you even
slap some else. (19)

"If my devotion has flaws
may thunder scorch my head",
so says Bhima,
"O Lord, curse me,
and consign this body to flames". (20)

Canto XXVIII

He who is born
with attributes of *naga,*
catches snakes,
and earns his living
as a snake-charmer. (2)

He who is born
with attributes of *prithvi*
is endowed with
supreme patience.
Praise or slander
affect him seldom.
He stands aloof from both. (3)

He who is born
with attributes of *diga*,
lives away from home.
Just like a tornado
his mind wanders
hither and thither. (4)

He who is born
with attributes of *dharma*
commands respect
in meetings and forums.
He upholds justice,
routs injustice,
always voices the truth. (5)

He who is born
with attributes of *papa,*

passes his days
in gross ignorance,
preaching injustice.
Truly unspeakable
are his deeds. (6)

He who is born
with attributes of *kama,*
is never steady at heart.
Restless and wild is he
in his passion for
the embodied *Prakriti.* (8)

Those who carry
attributes of *Kala Yama*
fierce and wrathful are they.
They have invaded
the land of *Bharat.*
They have *kshatriya* traits,
and are utterly powerful. (7)

The one who is born
with traits of Rambha and Maneka,
is adept in playful deception.
She makes clever gestures
with a pair of dancing eyes,
and frolics about merrily. (9)

He who is born
with attributes of deities,
beautifully plays
drums, cymbals, tambourines,
and other instruments all. (10)

He who is born
with traits of a king
has a number of cronies.
Defiant by nature,

he puts on airs,
and craves for
high offices. (11)

He who is born
with traits of Visnu,
is often tightlipped.
He is fond of
disguises and idol worship. (12)

He who is born
with traits of Brahma,
performs rites and rituals.
Devoted to customs,
he leads the life of a *brahmachari*.
(13)

He who carries
attributes of *devas*,
passionately studies the *Vedas*.
He focuses on
various rites and rituals,
hymns and incantations. (14)

He who is born
with attributes of Ṣhiva,
is fond of hygiene.
He bathes a lot,
and worships the *linga*. (15)

He who carries
attributes of *Indra*,
is truly magnanimous.
He writes letters,
and nurtures affinity. (16)

He who is born
with attributes of *Kuber*,
amasses great riches.

He transfers money
from here to there.
and invests in trades and commerce. (17)

He who is born
with attributes of *Chandra*
is of a calm disposition.
His words are sweet as nectar,
as soothing as sandal paste. (18)

However,
he who carries
attributes of the Name,
lords over all.
People serve him
as his slaves.
Thus, says Vima
who derives the power of a guru
from His name. (20)

Canto XXIX

The Lord,
who bathes in the Ganges,
dines at *Nilagiri,*
sports with Radha in *Vrindavan,*
and retires to bed in *Dwarka*; (12)

That *Purusa*
is now revealed
in His own form—
the form of a warrior.
I pass my days
wiping tears off my face.
What more will I say
of my own misery? (13)

None in the universe
is ever happy.
Premature death stalks
heaven, earth, and
the nether regions. (14)

The day, *Anadi Purusa*
becomes the King,
I will serve Him
as his humble slave. (15)

"The Name is without
birth or decay"—
if this be true
through the ages,

he who follows
the ordained course of *karma*
will achieve everything
even while leading
the life of a house-holder. (17)

Since early in life,
I have focussed on
the Word devoid of desires.
If the Lord does not
give me my share
I will insist and claim. (18)

Death follows birth,
birth follows death—
thus it goes.
While in this mortal world,
I will enjoy my share. (19)

If it is true
that I am born
with the traits of *Brahman*,
then, after death,
may I proceed
to His sphere.
So says Bhima,
the lowly orphan. (20)

Canto XXX

Lord *Anadi* is my father.
Adi shakti is my mother.
Born of their union
I am blessed with
the vision of a poet. (1)

Before them I bow.
Alas, words have become elusive,
I fail to compose further.
O Lord, have mercy on me. (2)

May I be blessed
by father and mother;
may words,
both meaningful and nonsense
flow in profusion.

Just as the *Mahanadi*
bursts its banks
in the season of rain,
so also,
let the verses
come in floods. (4)

Day and night,
I worship
the entwined feet
of my parents.
May I forever
feast on nectar. (6)

From a giant banyan tree
I have been reduced
to a mere blade of grass.
The *yuga* passes by.
Without the blessings
of father and mother,
one never finds
a shelter on earth. (7)

Ferocious *Prakriti*
deeply affects
this womb-begotten form.
Its skin and hair
are smeared all over
with the soot of *maya*.
Merciful parents
set me on
the path of *anubhav*. (14)

To *Mahima* alonc I bow.
He creates, He destroys.
He will decide
the fate of this
mortal frame. (12)

O Lord, have mercy on me,
fulfil my desires.
May there be
a ceaseless flow of verse.
May my fame last for ever. (13)

Canto XXXI

Day by day,
suffering grows.
O Lord,
forgive my faults;
come to the rescue
of your humble devotee. (1)

I am but a dunce.
I can only hope
for Your mercy.
Lowly Vima says,
Gurudeva is
his only support. (20)

Canto XXXII

A mere insect,
I am always sinful.
I know nothing about
sin or virtue,
good or evil. (9)

O *Anadi*,
shelter me from
the machinations of
kings, *asuras*, *mlechhas*
and
from the vicious web
of Your own *maya*. (15)

O Lord,
do not abandon me
to the hands of the sinful,
of *mlechhas* and *asuras*.
Do not for sake me
in this bottom-less ocean of sorrow. (19)

Canto XXXIII

O you all
living beings on earth;
O saints and sages,
I beg of you,
kindly settle the issue. (3)

Brahma, Visnu, and Siva,
O you four *yugas* and nine planets,
lend an ear to my plea,
and consider my case. (10)

I appeal
to the heavens,
to mother earth
and to the nether regions.
I reveal my woe
before you all. (11)

If justice is not done,
I will embrace death.
A poet's blood
will be on your hands. (12)

Leaving behind
my house and hearth,
my family and friends,
I have come to this world,
created by my Father.
Here I dwell and sport. (13)

Leaving behind
my father and mother,
my kith and kin
I seek refuge
in the Lord.
On Him I focus,
He is my only hope. (14)

I have forsaken
the path of the *vedas*,
the rituals and customs,
and the notions of
karma and *dharma*.
Only on the Guru
I focus now,
and wander on earth
hither and thither
like a lunatic. (15)

Despite having
a Savior so powerful
who has revealed
Himself on earth
my suffering grows.
Bhima, the orphan,
gazes upon the Void;
focuses on Him
who is devoid of desires. (20)

Canto XXXIV

This orphan soul
wanders ignorant
in the world.
Only God knows
what sins it incurs. (5)

I fear,
the world will say
I give myself airs.
But I alone know
the mystery of my birth.
I am the son of *Anadi* Guru. (8)

Trapped in mortal forms,
drowned in worldly affairs
how will they know
the norms ordained
for the *yuga*. (9)

They stand aloof
from the path of *anubhav*.
They pay no heed
to the word of wisdom.
Saddled with
mortal frames
bereft are they
of true awareness.
They will never know
what fulfillment is. (10)

I seat them
on my lap
and whisper it
in their ears.
Like a river in spate
my words swell;
but, alas
wisdom never
dawns upon then. (13)

Their share I give
as freely as
one gives away
dirt and dust.
Never am I
guilty of fraud.
I treat them all
as my sons,
and merrily impart
jnana-yoga. (17)

I see no difference
between men and women,
between age and youth.
To all of them,
I point it out
without any
hesitation. (18)

Canto XXXV

Perhaps
I am far from
Perfection.
I have not yet
become a saint.
Else,
why did He
give me birth
in the *kali yuga,*
among the *mlechhas*. (12)

Only since the Lord
has revealed Himself
on this earth
virtue and piety
still survive.
Else, I tremble
like one in the winter,
to witness all
the unjust ways
of the world. (13)

How long on this earth
will I lead
a life full of fear?
The *Prakritis,*
twenty five in all,
wreak havoc in my heart. (14)

Who can harm
the humble devotee

in love with the Lord?
Truth I voice
in my verse,
other than this
I have no flaw. (16)

They take to each other
just as milk and water
when the self and the Lord
come together. (18)

At the time of union
there is no difference
between Guru and *shishya.*
Of one form are then
the Lord and devotee.
Together,
they sit down to supper. (19)

Canto XXXVI

How will one
portray them
apart from each other.
Who can relate
their union,
holy and wondrous.
My mortal tongue
will drop off,
my poor heart
will surely burst,
if I dare describe. (1)

He is,
neither the Guru nor the *shishya*;
neither the master nor the slave;
neither a *brahmin* nor a *chandal*.
Not is He either,
a man of high position. (2)

He is neither male nor female;
neither the father nor the son;
neither the brother nor the sister. (3)

Jati and *gotra*
He does not have.
Nor does He preach
discrimination.
Both of them
united at heart
set up their house. (5)

He is
neither auspicious
nor ominous;
neither time
nor death.
Neither man
nor wife.
In a single form,
He enjoys being both. (8)

Just as,
flesh covers bones,
so do,
Guru and *shishya*
envelop each other
in the ocean of wisdom. (16)

Just as
blood flows through flesh
all over the body,
so is the relation
between Guru and *shishya.*
How can one
separate the two. (17)

Canto XXXVII

If the feudal Lord
is but a dunce,
if the Guru never comes
to the *shishya's* rescue,
how embarrassing it looks! (12)

One serves the Guru
day in and day out,
without caring for
one's joys and sorrows.
But the Guru is not
kind and merciful
and never gives
anything in return; (13)

if this be true,
the wisdom of
such a Guru
is utterly futile.
What is the use
of serving Him
if one never
receives the wages. (14)

The Guru must bless
His disciple with
both riches and luxury,
and the word of liberation.
Never He should
desert the *shishya*
who serves Him truly. (15)

Canto XXXVIII

O Lord, have mercy.
Tell me, will I ever
attain fulfillment?
How acutely
burns my body!
May I bathe
in the holy Ganges. (10)

Long have I suffered
from hunger and thirst.
You have revealed
Yourself on earth.
Now tell me truly,
will I receive
my share of rice? (11)

O how I suffer
from acute poverty!
Tell me, will I find
the riches I desire?
Dear Narayana,
why are You
so utterly silent?
Speak to me. (13)

You brought me
into the world;
will You not
look after me?
You gave me
the name of a bard;
will I be able
to compose verse? (14)

Canto XXXIX

In air and water
You shaped my form.
This body is a forest,
dark and deep.
Trapped in *Prakriti*,
it is devoid of
real awareness. (1)

You gave me birth
in a human form,
wrote my fate
on my brow
and sent me here
on to the earth. (2)

The fate He wrote
alternates between
fortune and woe.
The Lord only knows
right and wrong
true and false.
I know nothing. (3)

He is the Lord,
the powerful One.
Weak and frail
I float helpless
in the ocean of the world. (4)

If the Lord wipes off
the evil omens of fate,

I will survive
to meet my Creator.
All my doubts
will be laid to rest
the day I meet Him
in this body of mine. (5)

Will of the Lord
ordains for sure
the profit and loss
of the body-universe.
If His mercy
remains on me
this body will never
fall into decay. (11)

Precious is this birth,
rare is the human form –
finest in the creation.
Why then O Lord,
You allow Death
to prey on this form? (12)

Canto XXXX

If the world drowns
in the floods of *pralaya,*
where will I live?
Deeply anxious am I
for this body-universe. (6)

Day in and day out,
I pray to the Lord.
For, if the word is destroyed
where will I go? (10)

He is the Lord,
the omniscient One.
In this evil era of *kali*
whatever happens
across the universe,
He knows it all. (17)

Hence, He has
appeared on the earth
to reveal the *dharma.*
In the ocean of the world
He has lit the holy fire. (18)

This path is lit
by the glory of the One
Who is beyond words.
Those who tread
this path of the Lord
shall be the seeds

of a new creation.
Rites of the journey
are severe indeed;
not many will
embark on it. (19)

Canto XXXXI

A devotee devoid of desires –
thus, named me the Lord
before the whole world.
The verse I compose
are words from the Lord,
not a poet's fiction.
They echo allover
the infinite universe. (1)

The slave of the Lord
is the powerful one.
He contains within
all nine continents,
and the infinite universe. (2)

Canto XXXXII

I swim with a stone tied to my neck.
I have chosen sorrow over bliss.
None so foolish as I . (5)

I choose woe instead of joy,
darkness in place of light.
Leaving behind my village,
I have wandered into
the deep dark woods. (6)

I have strayed from
peace into restlessness.
My anxiety is endless.
Abandoning the deities
of my house,
driven by *maya,*
I worship others' gods. (7)

I choose poison over nectar.
Renouncing my *dharma*
I have embraced
strange gods.
I am reaping the fruits
of my own *karma.*
Whom shall I blame? (9)

The Name should be
one's only recourse.
However,
driven by *Prakriti,*

my actions did lack
real awareness.
Now I realize,
I made a mountain
out of a mole hill
and strayed from
the path of Guru *dharma*. (18)

Canto XXXXIII

Knowingly I strayed
from the path of the Name
Secure land,
I have long forsaken.
My lowly actions
have plunged me
deep into the abyss. (5)

Before my Guru
I plead guilty.
Straying from
the path of devotion,
I have given myself
over to *adharma*. (6)

O Protector of the earth,
may You come to my rescue.
Else, I drown for sure.
Do not blame me later
that I informed You not
when the world met its doom. (16)

Canto XXXXIV

What bitter enmity
my mortal imagination
bears towards me!
The tree of my *karma*
hardly grows well.
It yields only
rotten fruits.
Which one then
shall I pluck? (4)

The flowers and foliage
I eagerly did search,
but could not find
a single fruit good.
Whichever,
I partook of
turned out sour.
None tasted sweet. (5)

Rotten and unripe
all of them were
Not even one
did taste good.
Despite having
the Lord of the Void
as my Guru,
such turns out
to be my fate. (6)

Canto XXXXV

Gurudev, my Lord
is the *Nirguna Purusa.*
I am the one
who is *saguna.*
May the Lord
show me the path
as I enter the woods. (1)

Gurudev, my Lord
is the sinless *Purusa.*
I am the one
full of sins.
May the Lord
free me from
this life of sin. (6)

Gurudev, my Lord
is without a form;
also is He
all alone.
I am the one
who drags around
a pair of forms.
Wicked *maya*
envelops me
since I took up
a mortal form. (12)

With a body
full of Void

the *Purusa* is
well beyond
human imagination
and mortal words.
One finds Him not
in the holy scriptures. (17)

In the *kali yuga,*
Mahima dharma alone
shines on the earth.
No other path
shall lead one
to liberation.
Know for sure
this path fetches
both riches and release. (19)

Canto XXXXVI

This path shines
in these years of kali;
no other path
ranks above it.
The name of *Mahima*
is sharp as a sword. (7)

The Lord proclaimed
"death cannot conquer
devotees of *Mahima*."
However,
His unfailing words
now prove to be false. (8)

Canto XXXXVII

O Lord,
You have lent me
a look full of mercy.
Humble devotion
is the interest
levied on it.
Tell me now,
how much of it
remains to be paid? (11)

My entire life
is nearly spent
paying You back
seer by seer.
I do my best
to pay off the debt;
Yet,
I know not if
the Lord accepts
what I repay. (12)

Its four years since
I borrowed from You.
Over the years
You never bothered
to keep an account.
And now, out of spite
You torment me.
Why o why? (13)

Its not me alone;
all have borrowed
from You O Lord.
When You settled
terms of the deal
why did You not
put them down
in black and white? (14)

Do You want
that I pay You back
all over again?
O *sahu*,
the evil star of *Rahu*
set me free,
I beg of You. (15)

Sahu should never
deceive the debtor;
You are O Lord,
the *mahajan* of
entire universe.
Truly infinite
are your riches. (16)

If the creditor is
honest at heart,
the debtor benefits.
One lends,
the other repays;
the bond between then
lasts for ever. (18)

Canto XXXXVIII

Gurudev, my Lord,
kindly set me free
from all my debts.
The formless Lord
knows for sure
how I feel within. (4)

For once,
listen to my plea;
trample not on
my humble hopes.
Forgive my sins
and accept me as
Your loyal slave
for ages to come. (17)

Into what abyss
have I plunged myself!
Lead me out, O Lord.
Wherever I turn,
my eyes behold
the pompous ways
of these men of *kali*.

Canto XXXXIX

The fools claim
"we do know
what is *Brahman*."
How utterly deceived
and confused they are!
They wander a lot,
never reach the goal,
and end up
tired and weary. (16)

How arrogant
the ignorant are!
He who slanders
satya dharma,
cuts short his life. (19)

Canto L

People do not believe
even when they see it
with their own eyes.
They want to put
holy *satya dharma*
to further tests! (3)

Fools and dunces,
neck deep in
vile customs;
brimful of
petty opinions,
dare ridicule
satya dharma!
O Lord of the world,
just imagine,
if I grow furious
what will their fate be? (6)

Seated on his throne
the king condemns me.
With rude gestures
of hands and face,
he throws at me
arrogant words: (7)

"You may worship
your revered guru.
since you have
put him through

trials of faith
and are now
sure of him.
But we have not
tried him ever;
then why shall we
bow to him
as our guru?" (3)

The courtiers all
gathered in groups
make fun of me.
Sitting together
the *suras* and *asuras*
plot against me. (9)

They taunt and ask:
"You worship *Mahima*.
We will ask you something;
do not lie to us. (10)

In how many days,
do you all intend
to bring back
the age of *satya*?
Sitting together
you all dine,
and love your share
of meat and wine.
Fond you are
as I hear,
of women as well.
You dare pollute
the castes of all! (12)

Your men and women—
all live together,

and worship *Mahima.*
Many have come
and told me as much. (12)

Devoted to *Mahima*
those men of yours
dare accept food
from all and sundry.
The women also
bow before him!
Their caste-purity
is lost forever. (13)

Ladies of good families
are being led astray.
Has fate ordained this
that all the castes
will come together! (14)

All will become *mlecha*
in the evil years of *kali*—
these words of ill omen
have indeed come true.
With our own eyes we see
what you all are up to. (15)

How gullible
all of you are!
You accept him
as your Lord
who is but
a mortal man!
We have seen him
with our own eyes
whom you pray
as *Param Brahman.* (16)

O you *brahmins*,
vaisnavs and *shudras*,
utterly deceived
all of you are.
Can he be the *Brahman*
who has on earth
father, mother,
kith and kin!" (17)

People say
"just like us
he also leads
a house holder's life.
What powers
does he have
that we accept
him as the Lord?" (19)

Canto LI

Seeing us from afar
people of the world
hurl abuse at us.
Full of scorn
they remark,
"*babas* and *matas*
wander about
in plenty these days.
Who knows,
what a future
awaits us all. (2)

"The whole lot
are utterly doomed.
They can not hope
for liberation.
Having forsaken
ancestral gods,
and revered friends,
behold, they choose
to embrace the gallows! (3)

"Out of sheer arrogance
they dare ridicule
Brahma, Visnu, Shiva
and other deities all.
The dunces have
gone stark mad. (4)

"They belong to neither this
nor that side of the shore.

Hopelessly they are
drowned in between.
Forsaking their
women and children
wealth and riches,
they are foolishly ready
to run away! (5)

"They know not a thing
save bathing and eating.
They hardly follow the *vedas*;
have dumped the scriptures also. (6)

"They do not bow
to gods and goddesses.
They never worship
Lord Jagannath.
If asked to revere
the holy leaves of *tulsi*,
they are ready instead
to piss on them!" (7)

Thus people say
all over the world.
O Lord *Alekh*,
who resides in the Void,
settle the issue. (9)

Against us,
people nurse a grudge.
What will we do?
O omniscient Lord,
have mercy,
and show us a way out. (10)

Ever since
we took refuge in *Alekh*,
we do not find

a welcome shelter
anywhere in the world. (11)

People say,
"devotees of *Mahima*
dare not revere
prasad of the deities.
Then how can we
be friends with them?
Our paths diverge.
Harmony between us
is lost forever. (13)

"*Mahima* finds no mention
anywhere in the *vedas*.
Neither have we heard
about him before.
We do not know,
where from this sect
crops up now.
We are puzzled
to say the least. (14)

"Even if we face
threat of death
we will never
bow to *Mahima*.
Rules of the sect
are hard to follow.
Who takes the pains
to get up early,
eat only during the day
and offer prayers
at dawn and dusk
without fail? (15)

"We will tread on the path
paved by our ancestors.

Why should we
worship *Mahima*
and lose our caste?" (16)

The *suras* assert
they will invade our seat.
Envious are they
of my *tapasya*.
May such people
hostile and adverse,
be held back. (17)

Tapovanta devas
will launch a raid
on the *sura bhuvan*
they will surely seize
the *indra-pada*.
Great luxury and riches
all will enjoy;
on the *shunya-viman*
all will sit. (18)

What wicked tricks
they play on me!
Day in, day out
how they torment me!
O Lord,
with great care,
inflict on them
spells of *maya*.
May they never
find the *Brahman*. (19)

Humbly I hope,
may the issue
be settled somehow.
Vima laments,
misfortunes are aplenty. (20)

Canto LII

The *devatas* wonder
"why have they
forsaken us?
Followers of *Mahima*
dare not observe
rituals in our honor!
What is worse
they have become
our companions
here in *brahman-lok*!" (6)

Therefore they
harbor a grudge
and inflict on us
acute misery.
In the form of *Prakriti*
they enter the souls
of the beasts in jungle
and prey on human beings. (10)

The dwellers of *visnulok*
often lament that
devotees of *Mahima*
pollute the offerings
meant for them.
Full of scorn, they say,
"Mahimaites dare
concoct a *saptamrita*! (11)

"They adorn the feet
of their *gurudev*
with sandal paste, camphor,
milk, curd, honey, molasses-
and thereby pollute them all." (12)

Canto LIII

What a commotion
brahman-ganas create
when we question
the words of the *vedas*!
It hurts their vanity
that *Alekha dharma*
defies the *vedas*. (1)

They fume,
"devotees of *Mahima*
do not care for
Vedic diktats.
Devoted to *akarma*
they have dumped
in the nether world
all the rites and rituals
honored in the *vedas*." (3)

Brahma-ganas are born
as *brahmins* on the earth.
They writhe in agony
as *Alekh dharma*
transforms all
into the *chandals* of
the Supreme Spirit. (5)

[][The dawn of *dharma*
ha spelt the doom
for Vedic rites
for *mantra*, *yantra*
and *tantra* as well. (6)

Rudra-ganas
incite their Lord
to inflict on us
acute misery.
They rage and fume,
"followers of *Mahima*
have thrown away
the sacred thread
and all such signs.
Hardly they care
for good auguries. (9)

"For them
the *Shiva-linga*
is no better than
a piece of stone.
They dare say,
worship of *Shiva*
is not the true path!
They counsel the laity
not to tread on it." (11)

In great fear
we pass our days.
One dare not
venture out
either in the day
or even at night.
O Lord *Alekh*
may You shelter us
from all menace. (17)

Canto LIV

Yoga-Maya steals into
the hearts of men.
She makes them indulge
in deceit and fraud.
O you followers
of Lord *Alekh*,
misfortune falls
again and again.
Be on guard,
pray to the Lord
with all your devotion. (1)

Deva-ganas enter
the souls of demons
and make them inflict
misery on all.
Day after day
passes by,
the rivulet of sin
still runs its course
on the wide earth.
It refuses to dry. (2)

Sura-gana steal into
the hearts of *acharis*,
and delude them.
The kali yuga
is about to end;
yet they remain
indifferent to
Satya Mahima dharma! (3)

Canto LV

Men and women
they all behave
in a wanton way.
No one cares
for virtue or sin.
No one bothers
for their repute. (6)

On the wide earth
no one is chaste.
No one commands
control over
passions of the flesh.
Each one is
an adulterer
or an adulteress.
Where shall I go?
Sin is pervasive,
and I dwell on *dharma*. (7)

People long for
peace of heart
but refrain from
the requisite *karma*!
How will they
pass their days?
Such nitwits
are the lot,
they stray into
the dark woods of *maya*. (11)

Having strayed
into the woods
they have lost
their awareness.
Ah, they mistake
acute suffering
for supreme bliss!
Of their evil actions
they carry the burden. (11)

Though gifted with
the power of speech
their ways are
not any better
than dumb beasts'.
Aimless wandering
tires them out;
profusely they suffer
day in, day out. (13)

Knowingly they give in
to the charming illusions
fashioned by *Prakriti*.
Even if man has
a beautiful form,
he is truly counted
among the animals. (13)

O pious souls
humbly serve
guru-dev, our Lord.
No other path
will ever lead
to the goal
long cherished.
Your misfortunes all
will be warded off.
Longer shall you live. (14)

I have utterly failed
to serve the *Guru*.
However,
may you wait on Him
with all devotion.
As I gaze upon
your loyal service,
my sinful eyes
will find liberation. (19)

Canto LVI

Born into the world,
one cannot help
committing sins.
Hence, I am
deeply anxious.
Never the less,
if one chants
the name of *Mahima*
sins are burnt off.
Of no use is
any other name. (7)

In these trying times of *kali*
the Name will come
to the rescue of all.
The merciful One
will keep the mortals
from straying into
mud and mire of sin. (10)

The Lord will
burn and wash me clean.
May the merciful One
bless and keep me. (11)

Canto LVII

Humble service
to the *Guru*
yields so much,
that even if
one's progeny
in hundred generations
feast on it,
it will never dry up.
Devotion to Him
wards off misfortunes. (6)

Pious service
to the *Guru*
ensures a life
long and healthy.
None but Him
can cure one of
ailments all.
His devotee enjoys
the fruit of truth. (7)

He who serves
the revered *Guru*
wins applause
in symposiums.
He is never
ill at ease
in the courts
of gods and men
of kings as well. (9)

He who is
devoted to the *Guru*
is touched by the divine.
When alive on earth
his form glows like fire
and after demise
he goes to *vaikuntha*. (12)

Canto LVIII

O Lord,
how long will I suffer
these trying times of *kali*?
When will come,
the long cherished
age of *satya*? (9)

Carrying a human form
how can one resist *Prakriti*
in this world of illusion?
In my heart of hearts,
I loathe it deeply. (10)

This body-universe
belongs to the *Guru*.
He is responsible
for its well being.
I only beg this much:
may the Lord bless me
with divine mercy. (12)

O Lord,
why did You consign me
to a life of suffering
in this world of illusion?
I am unable myself
to see through
the mist of *maya*.
How then can I
guide others?

May You come
to my rescue. (13)

The Guru is born
of the *Brahman*.
He is the Savior.
What meager power
I have that,
He wants me now
to look after the world? (14)

"To what wilderness
have I come?
O Lord,
bless and keep
this body-universe",
so says Vima
as he kneels
in humble worship. (20)

Canto LIX

Its but natural
that I was deceived.
But o Lord,
You are the
omniscient One.
You should have
pulled my ears,
when I strove for
the pleasures of
a householder's life. (3)

O Lord,
if You consider me
a true follower
then, for once,
lend Your ears
to my pleas.
I am utterly lost
in the woods of *maya*. (8)

Alone in the dark woods
I kneel in prayer.
But I know not
whether the Lord
listens to me.
Having taken
a mortal form
I have strayed
from *vaikuntha*. (7)

The Lord bade me go,
and assured.
"I shall always
be with you".
But o my Lord,
despite You,
why such misery
be falls me? (8)

Canto LX

In the dark woods
I wander like
a vile beast.
Turning my back
on the pursuit of truth,
I have consigned myself
to this life of torture.
I have turned indifferent
to my own happiness! (6)

O revered *Guru-dev*,
I tremble in fear.
Kindly hold me tight,
and assure me of safety.
Kindly burn off
all my sins
of a million births. (10)

The Lord who resides
in the ocean of milk—
may He come
to my rescue;
may He obviate
the lurking perils.
Consumed with lust
for worldly pleasures
I committed the sin,
and tightened the noose
round my neck. (13)

Eternal glory of the Lord
I failed to fathom.
This mortal form,
born of semen
and menstrual blood,
is but ephemeral.
I miserably failed
to choose wisely
between the two. (18)

Canto LXI

O saintly souls
may you chant
the Lord's name
and partake in
the ocean of Glory.
If your devotion
merits His mercy
death will never
come to you. (1)

When one takes
refuge in the Lord
he is free from
all his fears.
If the Lord is
full of mercy,
the devotee lives
for ever and ever. (3)

When one seeks
shelter in the Lord,
he is set free
from the cycle of
birth and death.
His mortal frame
never falls.
He never loses
consciousness. (5)

If one keeps
to the path of yoga

indifferent to
worldly affairs,
he lives as long
as he desires.
The path leads
to immortality. (6)

If one chants
the Lord's name
misfortunes all
stay away.
If one prays
with all devotion
he can avert
the overtures of *Prakriti*. (7)

Thus have I heard
people say,
and I nurture
a profound hope.
Dharma and *karma*
I know nothing of.
Nor do I perform
yoga and *tapasya*. (8)

Canto LXII

O Lord,
why do You turn a deaf ear
to all my supplications?
How long shall I suffer
the slandering tongues? (1)

People ridicule me
wherever, whenever
they choose to.
With an upturned nose
they dare snort,
"Bhima, the lowly *kondh*."
All denounce me
as if I compel
my dear disciples
to sip the water
after washing my feet. (8)

No one's riches
do I plunder.
To none on earth
am I indebted.
But behold,
what rude gestures
they make at me!
How ill mannered
these *mlechhas* are. (9)

No one's inheritance
do I squander.
However,
all bear enmity
towards me

without a reason.
Like a bunch of mad dogs
they bark at me. (10)

I am jealous of none.
I deceive nobody.
Nor do I put on airs.
But still, the king
as well as his cronies
pick up quarrels with me. (11)

People do harbor
a grudge against me.
They plot to drown me.
No one is pure of heart;
all indulge in backbiting. (12)

I do not steal from you;
nor do I abduct
your daughters or sons.
Evil ways
I never propagate.
Only the truth
I always voice. (13)

From intrigues and schemes
I keep myself aloof.
I never lust after
another's land.
Yet, behold,
without reason
people of *kali*
revile me. (15)

I bear a grudge
against none.
Nor am I
a conniving lout.
However,
green with envy
people plot against me. (17)

Canto LXIII

It is rumored
that I have
accepted another's son
as my own;
misled people
using black magic
and made them lose
their caste purity! (1)

People allege
that I have
cast spells on
other's wives,
and made them my own.
They king and his cronies
with a sneer say,
"Vima claims to be
a revered *guru*
but yet leads
a householder's life. (2)

The *brahmins* fume,
I proclaim myself
an honored *guru*,
yet I commit
grave blasphemy. (3)

Though born into
the lowly *kandhas*
I dare receive

homage from
high caste *brahmins*! (4)

Thus say the fallen,
unclean, mean,
and foolish wretches.
The devils, demons,
ogres and bone-eaters,
all have come together. (5)

The pleasures of
family and fortune
were written on
my humble brow.
It is no skin off
any one's nose,
if I enjoy the fruits
of my past deeds. (10)

Every morsel eat,
the opulence I enjoy,
I earned it all
in past lives.
You may drag the issue
to the *dharma sabha*,
but all will
agree with me. (12)

Canto LXIV

He led me out
of my birth place;
schooled me in
the *vaishnav* way.
Life of a monk
was my calling,
yet I became
a family man.
It was all
the Lord's doing. (2)

Never had I thought
I will ever lead
a householder's life.
My days used to pass
serving the *Guru*.
Forsaking all desires,
I strove for *Brahman*. (3)

When people choose
the *vaishnav* path
they forsake their
native land.
No scripture
ever approves
that a *vaishnav*
starts a family. (4)

If an ascetic seeks
company of women

he is spurned as
the fallen one.
People count him
among the dead. (5)

However,
all said and done,
man proposes, God disposes.
If you seek any proof,
go and consult the wise. (7)

The riches I enjoy,
the splendid finery,
and ornaments I own –
I have not stolen them
from any one on earth.
Lord *Alekh* gifts it all. (12)

By the grace of Lord *Alekh*,
I live on the fat of the land.
It turns people green with envy. (13)

I serve none but the *Guru*.
I bow to none but Him.
I am at only
my *Guru's* beck and call. (14)

I am not the serf
of any king;
nor am I
the bonded slave
of any usurer.
Wherever the *Guru*
wishes me to,
thither I go.
Who can ever
hold me in bondage! (15)

Canto LXV

The Lord is my shelter.
But for Him,
people would have
slaughtered me.
He wraps me in
the banner of the *Void*,
and keeps me from
all perils. (1)

Verily like this
have they plotted
to drown me
many a time.
All the while,
Lord *Dharmaraj*
shelters me with
the *sudarshan chakra*. (2)

Only by the virtue
of *satya dharma*,
I am still alive
on the earth.
Again and again,
do they attack,
armed with
fierce swords. (3)

The world is wide,
but none to rely on.
Fraud and crooked,
all of them are.

But for the mercy
of Lord *Guru-dev*,
I would have been
destroyed by now. (4)

So full of guile
are the people in *kali*,
they wear a smile
on their faces,
but deep within
do they plot
to chase me out
of my abode! (5)

Out of ignorance,
people slander the *Guru*.
These sinful creatures
dare find fault
in the Lord! (12)

The dunces of *kali-yuga*
dare point a finger at me!
They accuse me of
vile transgressions.
O Yes,
he who is devoted to *Alekh*
is devoid of conscience! (13)

He who spreads on earth
the verses from heaven
sows the seeds
of *Brahman-jnana*
all over the world; (15)

he who composes
devotional verses,
authors scriptures
and enlightens the ignorant; (16)

he who awakens
the sleeping souls,
whose verse reflects on
issues of virtue and vice. (17)

which of the *vedas* says
that such a one
can ever commit
vile transgressions?
He who lives on nectar,
can he ever relish faces! (18)

Canto LXVI

He who follows *satya dharma*,
and worships the *Guru*,
can he ever commit
a heinous crime,
and abduct women? (2)

He who is serene
and full of mercy;
who is devoted to
dharma alone,
can he ever be
a debauch, a fraud! (3)

He who is revered
by two *nara-devas*,
will he be deceived
and embrace another's
wife and son
as his own! (8)

Canto LXVII

From door to door I went
and showed them unasked
the path to salvation.
But, the dunces said,
"who will accept fare
from all the castes,
and become a Christian?" (7)

To the men I said,
"you may lead
a householder's life,
no need to turn away
from women and pleasure.
Come and know
what is Brahman." (8)

They replied, however,
"we care only about
making a living;
if we have land to till,
and enough to eat,
we bother about nothing else." (9)

To the women I said,
"seek refuge in *Alekh*,
may you lead
a glorious family life.
If you serve your men
with all obedience,
you will give birth

to many a son,
and earn fame as
chaste women." (10)

They replied,
"born into
the caste of women
we cannot chant,
name of the Lord.
If both man and wife
run after Him,
a household falls into ruin. (12)

"Why should we
wait on our men?
Why to follow
the notions of
purity and pollution
about our menses?
As man and wife
we set up a home –
this is all we care for. (13)

"About *Brahman-jnan*
we bother not;
amorous trysts
are what we desire.
Even if we cohabit
four times a day
our urge is never
fully satiated. (14)

"Procreation means
everything to us
why should we
worship *Mahima*
and make fools
of ourselves? (15)

"We will not be able
to find good matches
for our progenies.
We will lose
the good will of people. (17)

"We love to adorn ourselves
with precious gems and jewels.
We relish delicious fare.
Adorned with perfumed oil
and turmeric paste,
our youthful shapes
look luscious. (18)

"Life is futile,
if at our age
we enjoy not
the pleasures of sex.
Of what use is
this woman's body
pulsating with
voluptuous youth? (19)

"The very idea of
devotion to *Alekh*
puts us off."
Thus, said the women.
Vima laments,
they turned away from
the path to salvation. (20)

Canto LXVIII

To the aged I said
"seek refuge in
Mahima dharma.
In these days of *kali*
this path is the best.
You will safely sail across
the ocean of the world." (1)

They replied,
"we have never
heard before
the name of *Alekh.*
None of the *vedas*
mention Him ever!
It's truly puzzling
to hear of Him now. (5)

"Our forefathers never
trod on this path.
How then will we
believe what you say
and worship *Mahima*? (6)

"It is said,
if we embrace
this path of yours
we will dine
with all and sundry.
Our ancestors will
refuge our offerings
if we tread this path. (7)

"All will perish one day.
Why should we
embrace Christianity?
None will then
perform our last rites.
We will end up being
reborn as insects! (9)

"We prefer death
to worshiping *Mahima*.
We seek not
liberation.
May you live
alone on earth,
ruthless death
we fear not. (10)

"We will listen no more,
who will do anything
fit for low castes only? (11)

"Forefathers will never
accept our offerings.
Son, you tell us lies;
to earn your bread,
you have become a fraud. (12)

Canto LXIX

To all I went,
the high and low,
shudras and *chandaals*,
and goaded them
to seek refuge
in *Mahima dharma*. (8)

I urged the kings
and *brahmins* too
to adopt the path
of *Mahima dharma*—
their only recourse
in these years of *kali*. (9)

If one commits
the heinous crime
of molesting his mother,
may he seek refuge
in *Mahima dharma*.
His burden of sin
will be burnt off;
the *Guru-dev* is,
holy fire personified. (10)

If one is guilty
of consuming liquor,
may he take refuge
in *Mahima dharma*.
He will be purged
of his sins

and will achieve
liberation. (11)

If one pleads guilty
of murdering children
may he seek shelter
in *Alekh dharma.*
All his sins
will be burnt off.
He will attain
the final release. (12)

If one commits
the vile crime
of killing women,
may he devote
all his life
to the service of *Guru.*
May he dwell
always on
the holy Name.
He will achieve
salvation. (13)

If a *brahmin* sleeps
with a *shudra* woman,
may he come
into the folds of
Mahima dharma.
All his sins
will be wiped off. (15)

If a king molests
the wives of
his humble subjects,
may he seek refuge
in *Alekh dharma.*
The *Guru* will burn off
all his sins. (16)

Canto LXX

In these evil years of *kali*
men turn out to be gluttons.
As *Prakriti* wreaks havoc
people go insane. (6)

They dine four times,
and cohabit five times a day—
Prakriti lets loose
its fury on them.
Hence, behold,
the alarming rise
in crimes and vices. (8)

These days
no one is ready
to obey the other.
All have lost
the purity of
their caste and clan.
Different castes
mingle and cohabit
to merge their
flesh and blood. (9)

No one cares
for the caste-order;
vedic customs
are done away with;
all the mortals
on the earth
claim to be equal. (10)

"We are of the higher castes"—
thus, they vent
their shallow arrogance
However, in secret,
they indulge in
excesses of *Prakriti.*
Everything is finished. (11)

Go and search
all over the world,
you will find
there is but one *jati.*
This world is created
by the Lord;
He has divided all
into hundreds of *jatis.* (13)

Behold the pair of forms
created by the Lord—
male and female.
These two *jatis* apart,
o wise souls, know for sure,
there is no third *jati*
to speak of. (14)

Canto LXXI

O Lord,
kindly wipe off all the sins
of my past hundred lives,
kindly erase the stains
from all over my body. (3)

Deceitful words, jealous rants,
sinful whispers and vile slanders—
I have lent them all my ears. (8)

My ears resound with
arrogant boasts, abject lies,
lustful jeers and incoherent rants.
O Lord,
kindly purify my ears. (12)

O revered *Guru-dev*,
kindly take pity on me,
and wipe off the sins
of my eyes. (12)

I have feasted them
on beautiful forms and
their luscious youth;
on everything enchanting
lustrous and colorful. (13)

The gray mist of these sins
blurs my vision now.
May the Formless One
forgive me.
May the sacred flame of *Brahman*
scorch the misty vision of mine. (15)

Canto LXXII

O Lord Alekh,
kindly burn off
the sins of my nose.
In these years of *kali*
sin is all pervasive. (1)

O venerable Lord,
my nose is full
of dirt and sin.
It inhales many a smell,
both good and bad. (2)

Let me confess
the innumerable sins
of my tongue.
It indulges in
slandering lies. (7)

Words flow from my mouth
like a river in flood.
O *Guru Alekh*,
purify my tongue. (10)

Canto LXXIII

Flesh and blood, skin and none—
every where in my form,
sin spreads its tentacles.
I am unable to free myself. (4)

This belly of mine,
large as the universe
harbors many a disease.
O Lord, take pity on me,
and purify it. (9)

O Lord,
scrub and wash
my entrails clean
in the holy rivulet
of *Param-Brahman.*
Rescue me
from this human form. (11)

You know everything;
what more will I tell You?
May you wipe off
the sins and ailments
of this vile belly of mine. (13)

My genitals are full
of loathsome sins
induced by *Prakriti*
I am obsessed with
enchanting *maya.* (15)

O Lord,
may You absolve me of
my sins committed in
this ocean of the world.
Burn off my stains
in the holy flames
of *Param-Brahman*,
and give me shelter. (16)

Canto LXXIV

O Lord *Alekh*
let me relate
the tale of my rectum.
The passage is full
of faces and sin. (1)

Because of the sins
committed by the anus
one suffers from piles.
The passage is full
of faces and sins
of past hundred lives. (2)

If one holds something back,
knows more than he admits,
he commits the anal-sin.
Company of the wise,
enlightens one on
the consequences of
such a crime. (3)

O *Guru Alekh*,
let me confess the sins of my feet.
Knowingly or unknowingly,
they trample on many a creature
in course of their wanderings. (7)

When I reflect on these crimes,
I am overwhelmed with guilt.
O formless *Void*,
kindly forgive me. (9)

Canto LXXV

As a washer man cleans
dirt from linens
so also, O Lord,
wash me clean
of my sins. (6)

As flames bring out
the shine of gold,
so also, O Lord
burn me in
the flames of *Brahman*,
and purify me. (7)

Canto LXXVI

In these evil years of *kali*,
sin is all pervasive.
How will I attain
salvation?
As I drift helpless
in the ocean of sin,
I only hope,
the Formless One
takes pity on me. (1)

Sins, guilt and other flaws—
these are born of
the desires of my heart.
O Lord,
wipe off my sins;
destroy my desires. (5)

O Sin,
Guru commands you now,
leave for whence you came;
depart for your former abode. (13)

For so long
you have fed on this form.
You shall coerce this body
not any more.
Bow to the *Guru's* command,
vanish at once. (19)

Canto LXXVII

O Sin,
leave this body, now.
Do not dare disobey
the words of the *Guru*.
Otherwise, you invite
the wrath of the Lord. (1)

O you diseases
of all the sixty four types,
flee at once and save your skin.
Otherwise, severe punishment
awaits you all. (4)

In the name of *Alekh*,
flee from this body, now.
Or else, the ferocious waves
sent by the *Brahman*,
will hit you hard.
You shall be
utterly destroyed. (7)

May this form of mine
sparkle like gold;
may it shine
like the luminous sun;
may I remain firm,
in my devotion to
the revered *Guru*
through the ages. (11)

May this body of mine
glow like the full moon;
so much so
the crystal stone
pales in comparison.
May the Formless One
bless me with
divine compassion. (12)

May this body of mine
shine like a mirror.
May it dazzle
like the lightning.
May the Formless *Brahman*
remain kind to me.
May this form of mine
glow like burnished copper. (14)

Let not
even a speck of dirt
stain this body of mine.
Let it be purified.
May it look as if
touched by the divine. (16)

Let my form be
as smooth as butter.
Let it be
without a flaw.
May the Formless One
show me mercy,
may I continue
to be blessed
with a glimpse of Him. (17)

Canto LXXXI

O you wise souls
lend your ears
to the glorious tale
of Lord *Alekh*,
the Supreme *Brahman*.
The path shown by Him
is flooded with light. (1)

Brahman is nameless,
beyond the scriptures.
Singular is He,
past all explanations. (2)

If you seek refuge
in the desire less *Brahman*,
may you conquer
your own passions.
Should you fail,
you will be guilty
before the Lord. (9)

If you choose
to worship the Formless,
may you do so
with true devotion.
Should you attribute
a form to Him,
you will commit
a heinous sin. (10)

If you seek
to revere the Fearless,
may you expel
your own fears.
Should you tremble
while serving Him,
you will be guilty
before the Guru. (11)

If you choose to worship
the Lord beyond imagination,
may you first
humble the flight
of your fancy.
Should your devotion
seek support
of imagination,
wondrous *Kala*
will thrash you hard. (12)

If you seek refuge
in the *dharma* of
non-violence,
may you refrain
from violence first.
Should you indulge
in violence at all,
blows will be
showered on you. (14)

Canto LXXXII

Seek shelter
in *satya dharma.*
May you truly serve
the revered *Guru.*
Lord *Alekh*
will be surely moved;
you will attain
liberation. (4)

Bathe in truth,
may you feed
yourself on truth.
Your actions,
if pure and true,
will please the Lord. (5)

Faults and follies,
loss and gain—
confess it all
before the *Guru.*
Should you hide
anything from Him,
you will be punished
by the Lord. (8)

Canto LXXXIII

If you seek
to worship the *Guru*,
follow the path
of *satya dharma*.
Forsake then
a householder's life.
Never bother
for mortal comforts,
find a shelter
in the Lord. (1)

If you wish to survive
the angry scimitar
of the mighty Goddess,
revere then
any vagina you see,
just as one
would revere his mother.
May you lead
life of an ascetic;
and eat from a potsherd. (10)

May you remain
day and night
aloof and pensive
just as one
gone insane;
may you wander
here and there
just as a child
without a care.
Then only.
you will find
the Supreme *Brahman*. (14)

Canto LXXXIV

Never touch
the secretions from
a woman's body.
Surely it is
a transgression,
and ruins your devotion
to the Brahman. (1)

May you lead
life of a celibate;
may your eyes
never rest on women;
may your mind
never dwell on them. (2)

When you receive alms
from the mistress of a house
may you never
look at her face;
may your eyes
rest always
on her feet;
bow to her
as you would
to the revered Mother. (3)

May you journey
into your body
and create therein
the vast universe.

May you perform
the rites of yoga,
and roam around
within your body. (14)

May you locate
within your body
the holy pilgrimages
of the outside world.
None so foolish
as a *yogi* who wanders
from place to place
on the earth. (15)

Canto LXXXV

Now I relate
how to worship
lord *Alekh*
while leading
a householder's life.
If one sings
praise to the lord
even as he follows
griha dharma.
he will attain
liberation. (1)

Seat your wife
on your lap;
may you savor
the pleasures of sex.
But all the while,
meditate on
the revered *Guru*.
May you never
refrain from
chanting His name. (8)

Devote to the Lord
your home and hearth,
joys and sorrows,
loss and gain.
Lead your life
as the *Guru's* slave. (4)

Early in the morning
smear cow dung
on your form,
and take a bath.
The sins of the night
of carnal pleasures
will be wiped off. (11)

May you never
discriminate between
a *brahmin* and a *chandal*;
may you never
bother about
jati or *gotra*;
may you never
conform to the order
of high and low. (14)

The ideal devotee
serves the visiting ascetics
with all his heart.
This apart
he cares for
nothing else.
Thus say,
the scriptures all. (16)

Canto LXXXVII

Brahman is formless,
cannot be seen.
Since His genesis,
He grows by pure will.
He needs no fare
like us mortals. (1)

He has no father,
nor is He
of a womb born.
No one has
created Him.
The formless One
is self created. (2)

He is nameless,
words can never
grasp Him;
nor can the *vedas*
describe Him. (3)

Worldly affairs
never affect Him.
He is beyond
the reach of sounds.
Alekh Brahman is
without the *nada-bindu*. (5)

He is without
Imagination,

and resides there
where mortal mind
cannot reach.
The Formless One
dwells in the *Void*. (9)

He is beyond
worldly events;
how can one
ever find Him
by performing rituals
on this earth? (11)

Canto LXXXX

When *kali,*
turns into *satya,*
utterly perplexed
people will run
hither and thither.
Numbed and dazed
they will fail
even to greet
one another! (1)

At that hour
each one will
be on his own.
The whole universe
will tremble in fear. (2)

To the men folk
I say again,
chant the name
of Lord *Alekh.*
Even while,
you earn your bread
meditate on Him,
in the heart of hearts. (5)
O you women
of the world,
may you set up
happy households.
Yet, remember,
breeding children

is not all.
May you tread
the path that leads
to salvation. (7)

Let the king
remain in his
seat of power
and carry out
raja-niti:
may he worship
Alekh at heart
and dispense justice. (9)

If came goes unpunished,
sheer anarchy will
prevail on earth.
The subjects will
disobey the king.
How overwhelming
the situation will be! (10)

Let the king
look after his land;
but may he also
seek shelter
in *satya dharma*;
if he does not,
he will have
only himself
to blame. (11)

Let a *kshatriya*
wield his arms;
let him slaughter
cattle and *brahmins*
However,
may he also

seek shelter
in *staya dharma*. (13)

If a *kshatriya*
does not take up arms,
who will then
repulse the foe?
With the name of the *Guru*
quivering on his lips
he will roar like a lion
afraid of none. (14)

Let him follow
the *kshatriya dharma*
but may he also
worship *Mahima*;
if he is devoted
truly to Him,
the *Guru* will come
to his rescue. (15)

Let a *brahmin* read
all the four *Vedas*,
performs his
rites and rituals,
but may he also
take refuge in
the *Guru dharma*. (16)

Let him be
learned in the *Vedas*,
let him continue
with his rituals
even only for
The show of it.
But deep within,
may he revere
Lord *Alekh*. (17)

Canto LXXXXIII

If you seek
to worship *Alekh*,
may you never
utter a lie.
What if you lack
the knowledge of scriptures
you will surely attain
liberation. (3)

If you choose
to worship *Mahima*
refrain from
chasing women.
Otherwise,
an untimely death,
and other misfortunes
will be fall you. (4)

If you seek
shelter in *Alekh*
bow to a woman
as you would
to your mother;
the Lord will
set you free
from the grip
of vile lust. (10)

If you follow
the path of *Mahima*
may you never
lust for a woman.
It does not matter
even if she is
your own wife. (12)

Canto LXXXXIV

If women worship
Lord *Alekh*
and remain truthful
to their spouses,
they will be blessed
with wealth and fortune;
will also attain
liberation. (1)

A woman should never
hide anything from
her revered spouse.
The husband is the wealth,
the Lord, of the wife. (2)

She who serves her man
with all devotion,
and gifts him her
luscious youth,
she will earn
fame of a *sati*,
will also attain
salvation. (3)

Be careful,
as you worship *Alekh*,
never turn unfaithful
to your husband;
never gift your body
to any other man.

It is a sin
if you care not
for your spouse,
and look out for lovers. (4)

One should not
even look at her face
who entertains
more than one man.
If one accepts water
from such a woman
the evil star of *Rahu*
inflicts on him
acute misery. (6)
O wise souls,
hear what happens
if a wife turns
adulterous;
the children she breeds
do not auger well
for generations to come. (13)

O wise souls,
this is the way
of the world.
The *stri jati*
is not to be trusted,
keep it in mind. (15)

None of the vedas
deem it advisable
to start a family,
in this *kali yuga*.
If one even touches
the *kali yuga* women,
an untimely death
befalls him. (16)

They are not women;
rather they are
devis incarnated.
By the power of *Kala-maya*
they take form of wives
and take away lives. (17)

The wise man
should never lead
a family life.
He is the powerful one;
he will conquer
these evil times of kali. (19)

Canto LXXXXVI

With folded hands,
I kneel before
the revered *Guru*,
and humbly plead
for His blessings.
O Lord *Alekh*,
may You grant
this much to me: (2)

dunces of the world
know nothing about
virtue and sin;
the *kali Purusa*
strikes them
unconscious. (9)

O Lord,
for them, I plead.
May you shelter them,
who follow Your path
from the assaults of lust. (10)

Canto C

"May you all
bow to *Alekh*;
behold,
kali comes roaring!"
Thus, I proclaim
all over the world;
may you heed
what I say. (1)

If you seek refuge
in Lord *Alekh*,
He will ward off
all your misery;
you will survive
the evil years of *kali*. (15)

I say it again,
and yet again.
May you not
find faults in me.
In this *kali yuga*,
Lord *Alekh* is
the only Savior.
May you chant His Name. (16)

With the couplet number thousand
Stutichintamani comes to end.
"May I find
shelter in the *Guru*,"
so says Bhima Bhoi,
the moon among the poets. (20)

Glossary

Abadhuta	A sect of ascetics.
Achari	One who follows rituals and customs
Ajapa	The Name that cannot be chanted.
Akarma	Evil actions.
Alekh	Unwritten, Indescribable
Anubhav	Heart felt experience.
Asura	Demons.
Baba and Mata Bada	Sarcastic references to male and female ascetics.
Simhar vesha	A particular custom of the Puri temple when Jagannath is decked up in finery.
Bhakti	Devotion.
Brahma gana	The followers of Brahma.
Brahmachari	Refers to the second stage in man's life when he is engaged in acquiring knowledge and leading the life of a celibate.
Brahmalok	Residence of Brahma.
Brahman	The Supreme Spirit. Variously referred to as Adi Brahman, Param Brahman.
Braj	Vrindavan, Gokul-places associated with Krishna. Jagannath,
Chakadola	One whose eyes are round.
Chandal	Low caste, Sweeper.
Darshan	An act of going to see and pray to a deity in a temple.
Darupratima	Jagannath, the idol made of wood.
Deva gana	The followers of the devas or the gods in heaven.
Dhanna Sabha	A congregation of saints and sages; a particular custom or ritual of the Mahimaites.
Diga	The four directions such as east, west etc. These four apart there are six other directions namely south-east, north-east etc.

Firingi Gotra	The British. The name of the mythological founding father of a clan.
Griha dharma	The duties of the householder.
Jambudwipa	Mythological name of India.
Jati	Caste.
Jnana	True knowledge, wisdom.
Kala	Time, Death.
Kandarpa	Cupid.
Kantani	A witch supposed to be particularly inauspicious.
Kanna Khanja	A kind of land grant prevalent in some of the feudatory states states of western Orissa in Nineteenth century.
Kula	Clan.
Mahajan	Moneylender.
Mahima dharma	Cult founded by Mahima Gosain. Also known as Guru dharma, Alekh dharma, Satya dharma.
Mantra	Incantations having occult powers.
Maya	Illusion.
Mlechha	Unclean, ritually impure.
Nadabindu	A yogic concept widely mentioned in the Medieval Oriya religious literature and elsewhere.
Naga	Cobra, probably refers to the followers of Nagarjuna.
Naganti	Probably Brahmins.
Nara devas	Circumstantial evidence refers to Hari and Vasu Panda.
Nilachal	Puri, the seat of lord Jagannath.
Nirguna	He who is devoid of all attributes.
Niskama	He who is devoid of desires.
Pathan	Muslim
Pradhan	A state official.
Pralaya	Apocalypse
Punya	Virtue.
Purusa, Prakriti	Key concepts of Sankhya school of thought. See introduction.
Raja-niti	The duties and policies of a king.

Rudra gana	The followers of Rudra.
Saguna	The one with attributes.
Sahu	The name of a caste. In popular parlance, it refers to a person who lends money on interest.
Samanta	Feudal lord.
Saptamrit	It consists of all the five ingredients of the Panchamrit-a mixture of milk, honey etc. offered to Hindu deities.In addition, it had two more ingredients. Hence the name. The purpose of inventing a Saptamrit was probably to override and resist the Hindu practice of offering Panchamrit.
Sati	Chaste woman
Shishya	Disciple
Shunya	Void.
Siddha	Self realized.
Sudarshan chakra	The disc of Visnu
Sura bhuvan	Residence of the Suras.
Sura gana	The followers of the Suras.
Sura	The gods in heaven, the wise.
Swaha	The word is chanted aloud when clarified butter is offered to the sacred fire in a yajna
Tapasya	Meditation.
Tapovanta	Those who have earned power through meditation.
Vaikuntha	Where Visnu resides
Vanbas	Exile in the woods.
Viman	The wooden palanquin meant for the idol of a temple.
Visnulok	Residence of Visnu.
Yantra	A tantric design and ritual.
Yavana	A non-Hindu individual or group.
Yoga-maya	Mother Goddess, Durga
Yogi	A wandering ascetic. Especially a follower of the Natha cult.
Yoginis	The sixty four companions of Durga.
Yuga	Age. Satya, Dwapar and other ages of Hindu mythology.

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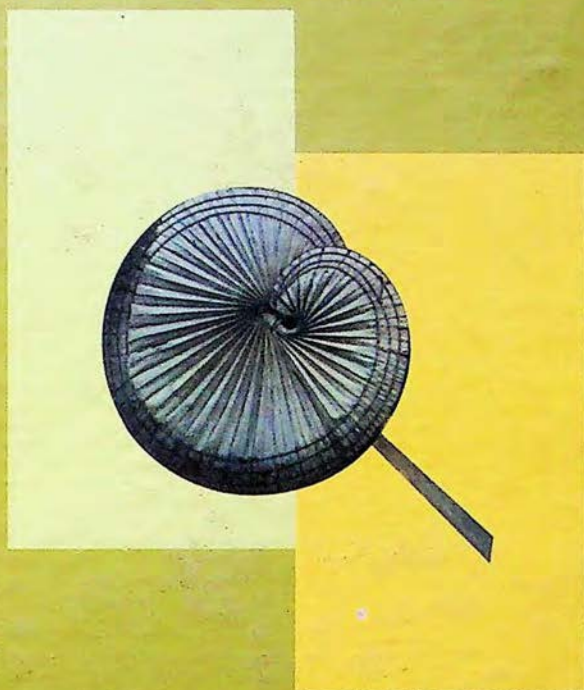
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Rs.250.00
$ 20.00

ISBN 81-901759-1-2